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CINQ-MARS:

OR,

A CONSPIRACY UNDER LOUIS XIII.

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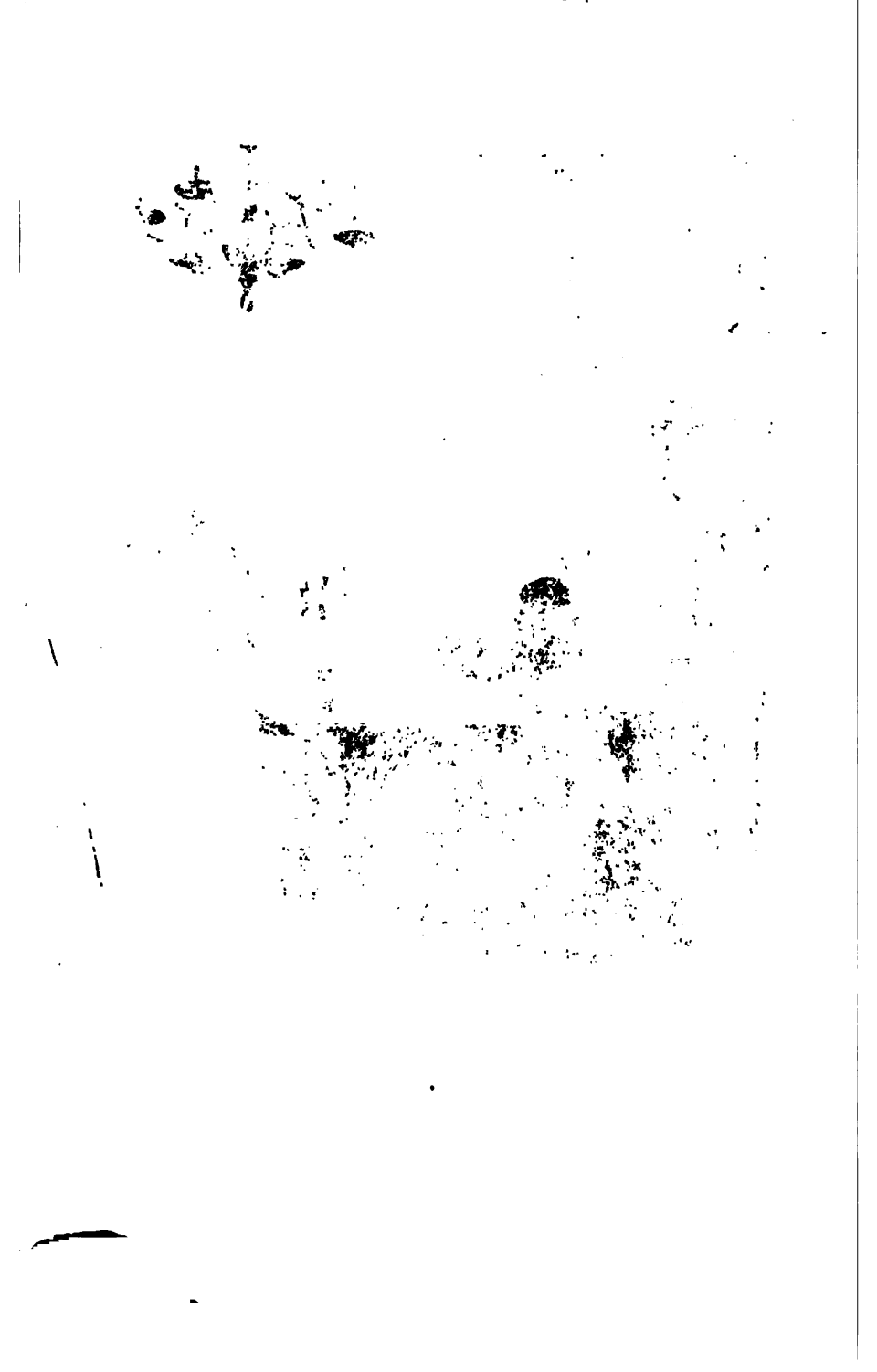

CINQ-MARS:

OR,

A CONSPIRACY UNDER LOUIS XIII.

BY

ALFRED DE VIGNY.

TRANSLATED

BY WILLIAM HAZLITT.

WITH DRAWINGS BY A. DAWANT, ETCHED BY GAUJEAN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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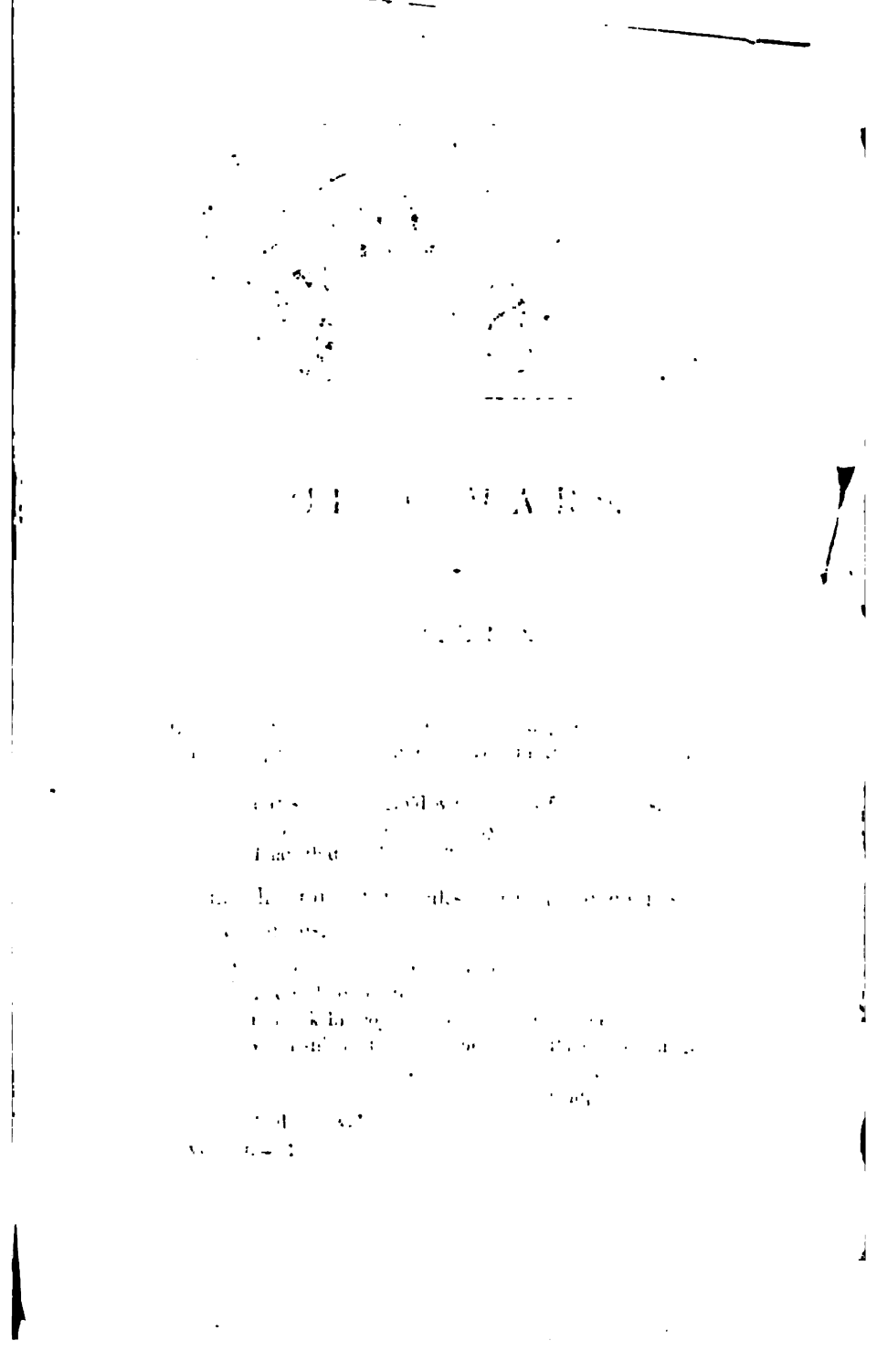


CINQ-MARS.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE ÉMEUTE.

Le danger, Sire, est pressant et universel, et au delà de tous les calculs de la prudence humaine. — MIRABEAU, *Adresse au Roi.*

"THUS with imagin'd wing our swift scene flies,
In motion of no less celerity
Than that of thought,"

exclaims the immortal Shakspeare in the chorus of one of his tragedies.

"Suppose that you have seen
The well-appointed king
Embark his royalty; and his brave fleet
With silken streamers the young Phœbus fanning.
. . . . . .
. . . behold,
And follow."

With this poetic movement he traverses time and space, and transports at will the attentive assembly to the theatre of his sublime scenes.

We shall avail ourselves of the same privilege, though without the same genius. No more than he will we seat ourselves upon the tripod of the unities, but merely casting our eyes upon Paris and the old dark palace of the Louvre, we will at once pass over the space of two hundred leagues and the period of two years.

Two years! what changes may they not have upon men, upon their families, and above all in that great and so troublous family of nations, whose long alliances a single day suffices to destroy, whose wars are ended by a birth, whose peace is broken by a death! We ourselves have beheld kings returning to their dwelling on a spring day; that same day a vessel sailed for a voyage of two years. The navigator returned. The kings were seated upon their thrones; nothing seemed to have taken place in his absence, and yet God had deprived those kings of a hundred days of their reign.

But nothing was changed for France in 1642, the epoch to which we turn, except her fears and her hopes. The future alone had changed its aspect. Before again beholding our personages, we must contemplate at large the state of the kingdom.

The powerful unity of the monarchy was rendered still more imposing by the misfortunes of the neighboring States. The revolutions in England and those in Spain and Portugal rendered the calm which France enjoyed still more admired. Strafford and Olivarès,

verthrown or defeated, aggrandized the immovable Richelieu.

Six formidable armies, reposing upon their triumphant weapons, served as a rampart to the kingdom. Those of the north, in league with Sweden, had put the Imperialists to flight, still pursued by the spirit of Gustavus Adolphus; those on the frontiers of Italy had in Piedmont received the keys of the towns which had been defended by Prince Thomas; and those which strengthened the chain of the Pyrenees held in check revolted Catalonia, and chafed before Perpignan, which they were not allowed to take. The interior was not happy, but tranquil. An invisible genius seemed to have maintained this calm, for the king, mortally sick, languished at St. Germain with a young favorite; and the cardinal was, they said, dying at Narbonne. Some deaths, however, betrayed that he yet lived; and at intervals, men falling as if struck by a poisonous blast recalled to mind the invisible power.

Saint-Preuil, one of Richelieu's enemies, had just laid his *iron head* upon the scaffold *without shame or fear*, as he himself said on mounting it.

Meantime France seemed to govern herself, for the prince and the minister had been separated a long time; and of these two sick men, who mutually hated each other, one had never held the reins of the State, the other no longer showed his power,—he was no longer named in the public acts; he appeared no longer in the government, and seemed effaced everywhere; he slept, like the spider surrounded by his nets.

If some events and some revolutions had taken place

during these two years, it must have been in hearts; it must have been some of those occult changes from which, in monarchies without firm foundation, terrible overthrows and long and bloody dissensions arise.

To enlighten ourselves, let us glance at the old black building of the unfinished Louvre, and listen to the conversation of those who inhabited it and those who surrounded it.

It was the month of December; a rigorous winter had afflicted Paris, where the misery and inquietude of the people were extreme. However, curiosity was still alive, and they were eager for the spectacles given by the court. Their poverty weighed less heavily upon them while they contemplated the agitations of the rich. Their tears were less bitter on beholding the struggles of power; and the blood of the nobles which flowed in their streets, and seemed the only blood worthy of being shed, made them bless their obscurity. Already had tumultuous scenes and conspicuous assassinations proved the monarch's weakness, the absence and approaching end of the minister, and as a kind of prologue to the bloody comedy of the Fronde, sharpened the malice and even fired the passions of the Parisians. This confusion was not displeasing to them. Indifferent to the causes of the quarrels which were abstruse for them, they were not so with regard to individuals, and already began to regard the party chiefs with affection or hatred, not on account of the interest which they supposed them to take in the welfare of their class, but simply because as actors they pleased or displeased.

One night especially, pistol and gun shots had been

heard frequently in the city; the numerous patrols of the Swiss and the body-guards had even been attacked, and had met with some barricades in the tortuous streets of the Isle Notre-Dame; carts chained to the posts, and laden with barrels, prevented the cavaliers from advancing, and some musket-shots had wounded several men and horses. However, the town still slept, except the quarter which surrounded the Louvre, which was at this time inhabited by the queen and M. le Duc d'Orléans. There everything announced a nocturnal expedition of a very serious nature.

It was two o'clock in the morning. It was freezing, and the darkness was intense, when a numerous assemblage stopped upon the quay, which was then hardly paved, and slowly and by degrees occupied the sandy ground which sloped down to the Seine. This troop was composed of about two hundred men; they were wrapped in large cloaks, raised by the long Spanish swords which they wore. Walking, without preserving any order, backwards and forwards, they seemed to wait for events rather than to seek them. Many of them seated themselves, with their arms folded, upon the loose stones of the newly commenced parapet; they preserved entire silence. However, after a few minutes passed in this manner, a man, who appeared to come out at one of the vaulted doors of the Louvre, approached slowly, holding a dark lantern, the light from which he turned upon the features of each individual, and which he blew out after having found the man he sought among them. He spoke to him in a whisper, taking him by the hand,—

"Well, Olivier, what did M. le Grand say to you?[1] Does all go on well?"

"Yes, yes, I saw him yesterday at St. Germain. The old cat is very ill at Narbonne; he is going *ad patres*. But we must manage our affairs roundly, for it is not the first time that he has played the torpid. Have you people enough for this evening, my dear Fontrailles?"

"Be easy; Montrésor is coming with an hundred of Monsieur's gentlemen. You will recognize him; he will be disguised as a master-mason, with a rule in his hand. But above all, do not forget the passwords. Do you know them all well, you and your friends?"

"Yes, all except the Abbé de Gondi, who has not yet arrived; but *Dieu me pardonne*, I think he is there himself! Who the devil would have known him?"

And here a little man without a cassock, dressed as a soldier of the French guards, and wearing very black false mustaches, slipped between them. He danced about with a joyous air, and rubbed his hands.

"*Vive Dieu!* all goes on well, my friend. Fiesco could not do better;" and rising upon his toes to tap Olivier upon the shoulder, he continued,—

"Do you know that for a man who has just quitted the rank of pages, you don't manage badly, Sire Olivier d'Entraigues; and you will be among our illustrious men if we find a Plutarch. All is well organized; you arrive at the very moment, neither too soon nor too late, like a true party chief. Fontrailles, this young man will get on, I prophesy. But we must make haste; in two

[1] The master of the horse, Cinq-Mars, was thus named by abbreviation. This name will often occur in the course of the recital.

hours we shall have some of the archbishops of Paris, my uncle's parishioners. I have lessoned them well; and they will cry, 'Vive Monsieur! vive la Regente! et plus de Cardinal!' like madmen. They are good devotees, thanks to me, who have stirred them up. The king is very bad. Oh, all goes well, very well! I come from St. Germain. I have seen our friend Cinq-Mars; he is good, very good, still firm as a rock. Ah, that is what I call a man! How he has played with them with his melancholy and careless air! He is the master of the court at present. The king, they say, is going to make him duc and peer. It is much talked of; but he still hesitates. We must decide that by our movement this evening. The will of the people! He must do the will of the people; we will make him hear it. It will be the death of Richelieu, you 'll see. It is, above all, hatred to him which is to predominate in the cries, for that is the essential thing. That will at last decide our Gaston, who is still uncertain, is he not?"

"And how can he be anything else?" said Fontrailles. "If he were to take a resolution to-day in our favor, it would be unfortunate."

"Why so?"

"Because we should be sure that to-morrow morning he would be against us."

"Never mind," replied the abbé; "the queen is firm."

"And she has heart also," said Olivier; "that gives me some hope for Cinq-Mars, who, it seems to me, has sometimes dared to frown when he looked at her."

"Child that you are, how little do you yet know of the court! Nothing can sustain him but the king's

hand, who loves him as a son; and as for the queen, if her heart beats, it is for the past and not for the future. But these trifles are not to the purpose. Tell me, *mon cher*, are you sure of your young advocate whom I see roaming about there? Is he all right?"

"Perfectly; he is an excellent Royalist. He would throw the cardinal into the river in an instant. Besides, it is Fournier of Loudun; that is saying everything."

"Well, well, these are the men we like. But take care of yourselves, Messieurs; some one comes from the Rue St. Honoré."

"Who goes there?" cried the foremost of the troop to some men who were advancing. "Royalists or Cardinalists?"

"Gaston and Le Grand," replied the new-comers, in a low voice.

"It is Montrésor and Monsieur's people," said Fontrailles. "We may soon commence."

"Yes, *par la corbleu!*" said the new-comer, "for the Cardinalists will pass at three o'clock. We were told so just now."

"Where are they going?" said Fontrailles.

"There are more than two hundred of them to escort M. de Chavigny, who is going to see the old cat at Narbonne, they say. They thought it safer to pass by the Louvre."

"Well, we will give him a velvet paw!" said the abbé.

As he finished saying this, a noise of carriages and horses was heard. Several men in cloaks rolled an enormous stone into the middle of the street. The fore-

most cavaliers passed rapidly through the crowd, pistol in hand, suspecting that something was going on; but the postilion, who drove the horses of the first carriage, ran upon the stone and fell.

"Whose carriage is this which thus crushes foot-passengers?" cried the cloakmen, all at once. "It is tyrannical. It can be no other but a friend of the Cardinal *de la Rochelle.*" [1]

"It is one who does not fear the friends of the little Le Grand," exclaimed a voice from the open door, from which a man threw himself upon a horse.

"Drive these Cardinalists into the river!" cried a shrill, piercing voice.

This was a signal for the pistol-shots which were furiously exchanged on every side, and which lighted up this tumultuous and sombre scene. The clashing of swords and trampling of horses did not prevent the cries from being heard on one side: "Down with the minister! Long live the king! Long live Monsieur and M. le Grand! Down with the *red-stockings!*" on the other: "Long live his Eminence! Long live the great cardinal! Death to the factious! Long live the king!" For the name of the king presided over every hatred, as over every affection, at this strange time.

The men on foot had however succeeded in placing the two carriages across the quay so as to make a rampart against Chavigny's horses, and from this, between the wheels, through the doors and springs, overwhelmed

[1] During the long siege of this town, the name was given to M. de Richelieu, to ridicule his obstinacy in commanding as general-in-chief, and attributing to himself the merit of taking La Rochelle.

them with pistol-shots, and dismounted many. The tumult was frightful, when the gates of the Louvre were all at once thrown open, and two squadrons of the body-guard came out at a trot. Most of them carried torches in their hands to light themselves and those they were to attack. The scene changed. As the guards reached each of the men on foot, the latter was seen to stop, remove his hat, make himself known, and name himself; and the guards withdrew, sometimes saluting him, and sometimes shaking him by the hand. This succor to Chavigny's carriages was then nearly useless, and only served to augment the confusion. The body-guards, as if to satisfy their consciences, rushed through the crowd of duellists, saying, —

"Now, Messieurs, be moderate."

But when two gentlemen had decidedly crossed swords, and were warmly engaged with each other, the guard who beheld them stopped to judge the fight, and sometimes even to favor the one who he thought was of his opinion, for this body, like all France, had their Royalists and their Cardinalists.

The windows of the Louvre were one by one lighted up, and many women's heads were seen behind the little lozenge-shaped panes, attentively watching the combat.

Numerous Swiss patrols came out with *flambeaux*. These soldiers were easily distinguished by their singular uniform. Their right sleeve was striped blue and red, and the silk stocking of their right leg was red; the left side striped with blue, red, and white, and the stocking white and red. It had no doubt been hoped in the royal château that this foreign troop would

disperse the assembly, but they were mistaken. These impassible soldiers coldly and exactly executed, without going beyond, the orders they had received, circulating symmetrically between the armed groups, which they divided for a moment, returning before the gate with perfect precision, and resuming their ranks as on parade, without informing themselves whether the enemies between whom they had passed had rejoined or not.

But the noise, for a moment appeased, became general by dint of personal disputes. In every direction challenges, insults, and imprecations were heard. It seemed as if nothing but the destruction of one of the two parties could put an end to the combat, when loud cries, or rather frightful howls, raised the tumult to its highest pitch. The Abbé de Gondi, then employed in dragging a cavalier by his cloak to pull him down, exclaimed, —

"Here are my people! Fontrailles, now you will have something worth seeing! Look! look already how they come on! It is really charming."

And he left his hold, and mounted upon a stone to contemplate the manœuvres of his troops, crossing his arms with the importance of a general of an army. The day was beginning to break, and from the end of the Isle St. Louis a crowd of men, women, and children of the lowest dregs of the people were seen rapidly advancing, casting towards heaven and the Louvre strange vociferations. Girls carried long swords; children dragged immense halberds and pikes of the time of the League; old women in rags dragged after them by cords carts full of rusty and broken arms; workmen of

every trade, the most of them drunk, followed, armed with clubs, forks, lances, shovels, torches, stakes, crooks, levers, sabres, and spits. They sang and howled by turns, counterfeiting with atrocious yells the cries of a cat, and carrying for a flag one of these animals suspended from a pole and wrapped in a red rag, thus representing the cardinal, whose taste for cats was generally known. Public criers rushed about, all red and breathless, throwing on the pavement and sticking on the parapets, the posts, the walls of the houses, and even on the palace, long satires in short verse, made upon the personages of the time. Butcher boys and scullions, carrying large cutlasses, beat the charge upon saucepans, and dragged in the mud a newly slaughtered pig, with the red cap of a chorister on its head. Young and vigorous men, dressed as women, and painted with a coarse vermilion, were yelling at the pitch of their voices, "We are mothers of families ruined by Richelieu! Death to the cardinal!" They carried in their arms straw children, which they threw into the river.

When this disgusting mob had overrun the quays with its thousands of imps, it produced a strange effect upon the combatants, and entirely contrary to that expected by their patron. The enemies on both sides lowered their arms and separated. Those of Monsieur and of Cinq-Mars were revolted at seeing themselves succored by such auxiliaries, and themselves aiding the cardinal's gentlemen to remount their horses and to gain their carriages, and their valets to convey the wounded to them, gave their adversaries personal rendezvous to terminate their quarrel upon a ground more secret and

more worthy of them. Reddening at the superiority of numbers and the ignoble troops which they seemed to command, foreseeing, perhaps, for the first time the fearful consequences of their political machinations, and what was the scum they were stirring up, they withdrew, slouching their large hats over their eyes, throwing their cloaks over their shoulders, and dreading the daylight.

"You have spoiled all, my dear abbé, with this mob," said Fontrailles, stamping his foot, to Gondi, who was already sufficiently confounded; "your good man of an uncle has fine parishioners."

"It is not my fault," replied Gondi, in a sullen tone; "these idiots came an hour too late. If they had arrived in the night, they would not have been seen, which spoils the effect somewhat, to speak the truth (for I admit that the daylight is detrimental to them), and we should only have heard the voice of the people: *Vox populi, vox Dei.* Nevertheless, there is not so much harm done. They will by their multitude give us the means of escaping without being known, and, after all, our task is ended; we did not wish the death of the sinner. Chavigny and his men are worthy fellows, whom I love; if he is only slightly wounded, so much the better. Adieu; I am going to see M. de Bouillon, who has arrived from Italy."

"Olivier," said Fontrailles, "proceed to St. Germain with Fournier and Ambrosio; I will go and give an account to Monsieur, with Montrésor."

All separated, and disgust did, with these high-born men, what force could not do.

Thus ended this blunder, calculated to bring forth

great misfortunes. No one was killed in it. The cavaliers, having gained a few scratches and lost a few purses, resumed their route by the side of the carriages along the by-streets; the others escaped, one by one, through the populace they had raised up. The miserable wretches who composed it, deprived of the chief of the troops, still remained two hours, yelling and screaming until the effects of their wine was gone, and the cold had extinguished at once the fire of their blood and that of their enthusiasm. At the windows of the houses, on the quay of the city, and along the walls, the wise and genuine people of Paris watched with a sorrowful air and in mournful silence these preludes of disorder; while the various bodies of merchants, dressed in black and preceded by their provosts, walked slowly and courageously through the populace towards the Palais de Justice, where the parliament was to assemble, to complain to it of these terrible nocturnal scenes.

The apartments of Gaston d'Orléans were in a great confusion. This prince then occupied the wing of the Louvre parallel with the Tuileries; and his windows looked into the court on one side, and on the other, over a mass of little houses and narrow streets which almost entirely covered the place. He had risen precipitately, awakened suddenly by the report of the fire-arms, had thrust his feet into large square-toed slippers with high heels, and, wrapped in a large silk dressing-gown, covered with golden ornaments embroidered in relief, walked backwards and forwards in his bedroom, sending every minute a fresh lackey to see what was going on, and ordering them immediately to go for the Abbé

de la Rivière, his general counsellor; but he was unfortunately out of Paris. At every pistol-shot this timid prince rushed to the windows, without seeing anything but some *flambeaux*, which were carried quickly along. It was in vain that he was told that the cries he heard were in his favor; he did not cease to walk up and down the apartments, in the greatest disorder, — his long black hair dishevelled, and his blue eyes open and enlarged by disquiet and terror. He was still thus when Montrésor and Fontrailles at length arrived and found him beating his breast, and repeating a thousand times, "Meâ culpa, meâ culpa!"

"Come! come!" he exclaimed from a distance, running to meet them. "Come! quick! What is going on? What are they doing there? Who are these assassins? What are these cries?"

"They cry, 'Long live Monsieur!'"

Gaston, without appearing to hear, and holding the door of his chamber open for an instant, that his voice might reach the galleries in which were the people of his household, continued to cry with all his strength, and gesticulating violently, —

"I know nothing of all this, and I have authorized nothing. I will not hear anything! I will not know anything! I will never enter into any project! These are rioters who make all this noise; do not speak to me of them, if you wish to be well received here. I am the enemy of no man; I detest such scenes!"

Fontrailles, who knew the man with whom he had to deal, said nothing, but entered with his friend, that Monsieur might have time to discharge his first fury;

and when all was said, and the door carefully shut, he began to speak, —

"Monseigneur," said he, "we come to ask you a thousand pardons for the impertinence of these people, who will persist in crying out that they desire the death of your enemy, and that they would even wish to make you regent if we had the misfortune to lose his Majesty. Yes, the people are always frank in their discourse; but they were so numerous that all our efforts could not restrain them. It was truly a cry from the heart, — an explosion of love, which reason could not restrain, and which escaped all bounds."

"But what has passed, then?" interrupted Gaston, somewhat calmed. "What have they been doing these four hours that I have heard them?"

"That love," said Montrésor, coldly, "as M. de Fontrailles had the honor of telling you, so escaped all rule and bounds, that we ourselves were carried away by it, and felt seized with that enthusiasm which always transports us at the mere name of Monsieur, and which leads us on to things which we had not premeditated."

"But what, then, have you done?" said the prince.

"Those things," replied Fontrailles, "of which M. de Montrésor had the honor to speak to Monsieur are precisely those which I foresaw here yesterday evening, when I had the honor of conversing with you."

"That is not the question," interrupted Gaston. "You cannot say that I have ordered or authorized anything. I meddle with nothing; I know nothing of government."

"I admit," continued Fontrailles, "that your Highness

commanded nothing, but you permitted me to tell you that I foresaw that this night would be a troubled one about two o'clock, and I hoped that your astonishment would not have been so great."

The prince, recovering himself little by little, and seeing that he did not alarm the two champions, having also upon his conscience and reading in their eyes the recollection of the consent which he had given them the evening before, sat down upon the side of his bed, crossed his arms, and looking at them with the air of a judge, again said in a commanding tone, —

"But what, then, have you done?"

"Why, scarce anything, Monseigneur," said Fontrailles. "Chance led us to meet in the crowd some of our friends who had a quarrel with M. de Chavigny's coachman, who was driving over them. A few animated words ensued and rough gestures, and a few scratches, which kept M. de Chavigny waiting, and that 's all."

"Absolutely all," repeated Montrésor.

"How, all?" exclaimed Gaston, much moved, and stamping about the chamber. "And is it, then, nothing to stop the carriage of a friend of the cardinal-duc? I do not like such scenes. I have already told you so. I do not hate the cardinal; he is certainly a great politician, a very great politician. You have compromised me horribly; it is known that Montrésor is with me. If he has been recognized, they will say that I sent him."

"Chance," said Montrésor, "threw in my way this peasant's dress that Monsieur may see under my

cloak, and which, for that reason, I preferred to any other."

Gaston breathed again.

"You are sure, then, that you have not been recognized. You understand, my dear friend, how painful it would be to me. You must admit yourself — "

"Sure of it!" exclaimed the prince's gentleman. "I would stake my head and my share in paradise that no one has seen my features or called me by my name."

"Well," continued Gaston, again seating himself on his bed, and assuming a calmer air, in which even a slight satisfaction was visible, "tell me, then, what has passed."

Fontrailles took upon himself the recital, in which, as we may suppose, the populace played a great part and Monsieur's people none, and in his peroration he said, —

"From our windows even, Monseigneur, respectable mothers of families might have been seen, driven by despair, throwing their children into the Seine, cursing Richelieu."

"Ah, 't is dreadful!" exclaimed the prince, indignant, or feigning to be so, and to believe in these excesses. "Is it, then, true that he is so generally detested? But we must allow that he deserves it. What! his ambition and avarice have, then, reduced to this extremity the good inhabitants of Paris, whom I love so much."

"Yes, Monseigneur," replied the orator. "And here it is not Paris alone, it is entire France, which, with us, entreats you to decide upon delivering her from this tyrant. All is ready; nothing is wanting but a sign

from your august head to annihilate this pygmy, who has attempted to assault the royal house itself."

"Alas! Heaven is my witness that I myself forgive him!" answered Gaston, raising up his eyes. "But I can no longer bear the cries of the people. Yes, I will go to their help; that is to say," continued the prince, "so that my dignity is not compromised, and that my name is not seen at all in the matter."

"Well, but it is precisely that we want," exclaimed Fontrailles, a little more at his ease.

"See, Monseigneur, there are already some names to put after yours, who will not fear to sign. I will tell you them immediately, if you wish it."

"But — but," said the Duc d'Orléans, fearfully, "do you know that it is a conspiracy that you propose to me so simply?"

"Fie, Monseigneur, men of honor like us! a conspiracy! Oh! not at all; a league at the utmost, a slight combination to give a direction to the unanimous wish of the nation and the court, — that's all."

"But that is not so clear, for after all this affair will be neither general nor public; therefore it is a conspiracy. You will not avow that you are concerned in it."

"I, Monseigneur! Excuse me to all the world, since the kingdom is already in it, and I am of the kingdom. And who would not sign his name after that of MM. de Bouillon and Cinq-Mars?"

"After, perhaps, not before," said Gaston, fixing his eyes upon Fontrailles more keenly than he had expected.

The latter hesitated a moment.

"Well, then, what would Monseigneur do if I told him the names after which he could sign his?"

"Ah, ah! this is amusing," answered the prince, laughing; "know you not that above mine there are not many? I see but one."

"And if there be one, will Monseigneur promise to sign that of Gaston beneath it?"

"Ah, *parbleu!* with all my heart. I risk nothing there, for I see none but the king, who surely is not of the party."

"Well, from this moment permit us," said Montrésor, "to take you at your word, and deign at present to consent to two things only, — to see M. de Bouillon in the queen's apartments, and Monsieur the master of the horse at the king's palace."

"Agreed!" said Monsieur, gayly tapping Montrésor on the shoulder. "I will to-day wait on my sister-in-law at her toilet, and I will invite my brother to hunt the stag with me at Chambord."

The two friends asked nothing further, and were themselves surprised at their work. They had never seen so much resolution in their chief. Accordingly, fearing to lead him to a topic which might divert him from the path he had adopted, they hastened to turn the conversation upon other subjects, and retired in delight, leaving as their last words in his ear that they relied upon his keeping his promise.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ALCOVE.

Agitez tous leurs sens d'une rage insensée,
Tambours, fifre, trompette, ôtez-leur la pensée.

N. LEMERCIER, *Panhypocrisiade.*

WHILE a prince was thus reassured with difficulty by those who surrounded him, and manifested to them a terror which might have proved contagious, a princess more exposed to accidents, more isolated by the indifference of her husband, weakened by nature and by the timidity which is the result of the absence of happiness, on her side set the example of the calmest courage and the most pious resignation, and tranquillized her terrified suite; it was the queen. Having hardly slept an hour, she heard shrill cries behind the doors and the thick tapestries of her chamber. She ordered her women to open the door, and the Duchesse de Chevreuse, *en chemise*, and wrapped in a great cloak, fell, nearly fainting, at the foot of her bed, followed by four of her ladies-in-waiting, and three of the women of the bed-

chamber. Her delicate feet were bare, and bleeding from a wound she had received in running. She cried, weeping like a child, that a pistol-shot had broken her shutters and her window-panes, and had wounded her; that she entreated the queen to send her into exile, where she would be more tranquil than in a country where they wanted to assassinate her because she was the friend of her Majesty.

Her hair was in great disorder, and fell to her feet. It was her principal beauty; and the young queen thought that this toilet was less the result of chance than might have been imagined.

"Well, *ma chère!* what has happened?" she said to her with *sang-froid*. "You look like a Magdalen, but in her youth, and before she repented. It is probable that if they wish to harm any one here it is me; tranquillize yourself."

"No, Madame! save me, protect me! it is this Richelieu who pursues me, I am sure!"

The sound of pistols, which was then heard more distinctly, convinced the queen that the terrors of Madame de Chevreuse were not vain.

"Come and dress me, Madame de Motteville!" cried she. But this lady had completely lost her self-possession, and opening one of those immense ebony coffers which then answered the purpose of wardrobes, took from it a casket of the princess's diamonds to save it, and did not listen to her. The other women had seen on a window the reflection of the torches, and imagining that the palace was on fire, threw jewels, laces, golden ...ses, and even the china, into sheets which they in-

tended to lower into the street. At this moment Madame de Guémené arrived, a little more dressed than the Duchesse de Chevreuse, but taking the thing still more tragically. Her terror inspired the queen with a slight degree of fear, because of the ceremonious and tranquil character she was known to possess. She entered without courtesying, pale as a spectre, and said with volubility, —

"Madame, it is time to make our confession. The Louvre is attacked, and all the populace are arriving from the city, I have been told."

Terror silenced and rendered motionless all the persons present.

"We shall die!" exclaimed the Duchesse de Chevreuse, still on her knees. "Ah, *mon Dieu!* why did I leave England? Yes, let us confess. I confess aloud. I have loved — I have been loved by —"

"Well, well," said the queen, "I do not undertake to hear it to the end. That would not perhaps be the least of my dangers, of which, however, you think little."

The *sang-froid* of Anne of Austria, and this last severe observation, however, restored a little calm to this beautiful personage, who rose in confusion, and perceiving the disordered state of her toilet, went to repair it as she best could in a contiguous closet.

"Dona Stefania," said the queen to one of her women, the only Spaniard whom she had retained with her, "go seek the captain of the guards. It is time that I should see men at last, and hear something reasonable."

She said this in Spanish, and the mystery of this

order given in a language which the ladies did not understand, restored those in the chamber to their senses.

The waiting-woman was telling her beads, but she rose from the corner of the alcove in which she had sought refuge, and hastened to obey her mistress.

The signs of the revolt and the symptoms of terror became meantime more distinct. In the great court of the Louvre was heard the trampling of the horses of the guards, the orders of the chiefs, the rolling of the queen's carriages, which were being prepared, should it be necessary to fly. The rattling of the iron chains dragged along the pavement to form barricades in case of an attack, hurried steps in the corridor, the clashing of arms, the confused cries of the people, which rose and fell, went and came again, like the noise of the waves and the winds. The door once more opened, and this time it was to admit a very charming personage.

"I expected you, dear Marie," said the queen, extending her arms to the Duchesse de Mantua. "You have been more courageous than any of us; you are attired fit to be seen by all the court."

"I was not in bed, fortunately," replied the young Princesse Gonzaga, casting down her eyes. "I saw all these people from the windows. Oh, Madame, Madame, fly! I beseech you to escape by the secret stairs, and to let us remain in your place. They might take one of us for the queen." And she added, with tears, "I have heard cries of death. Fly, Madame! I have no throne to lose. You are the daughter, the wife, and mother of kings. Save yourself, and leave us here!"

"You have more to lose than I have, *mon amie*, in beauty, youth, and, I hope, in happiness," said the queen, with a gracious smile, giving her her beautiful hands to kiss. "Remain in my alcove and welcome; but we will both remain there. The only service I accept from you, *belle enfant*, is to bring me here to my bed that little golden casket which my poor Motteville has left on the ground, and which contains all that I have most precious."

Then, in taking it, she added in Marie's ear, —

"If any misfortune should happen to me, swear that you will throw it into the Seine."

"I will obey you, Madame, as my benefactress and my second mother," she answered, weeping.

The noise of the combat redoubled on the quays, and the chamber windows often reflected the flashes of the fire-arms, of which they heard the explosion. The captain of the guards and the captain of the Swiss sent for orders through Dona Stefania.

"I permit them to enter," said the princess. "Stand aside, ladies. I am a man in a moment like this; and I ought to be so." Then raising the bed-curtains, she continued, addressing the two officers, —

"Gentlemen, first remember that you answer with your heads for the life of the princes, my children. You know that, M. de Guitaut?"

"I sleep across their doorway, Madame; but this movement does not threaten either them or your Majesty."

"'T is well; do not think of me until after them," interrupted the queen, "and protect indiscriminately all those who are threatened. You also hear me, M. de

Bassompierre; you are a gentleman. Forget that your uncle is yet in the Bastille, and do your duty by the grandsons of the dead king, his friend."

He was a young man, with a frank open countenance.

"Your Majesty," said he, with a slight German accent, "may see that I have forgotten my family, and not yours." And he displayed his left hand despoiled of two fingers, which had just been cut off. "I have still another hand," said he, bowing, and withdrawing with Guitaut.

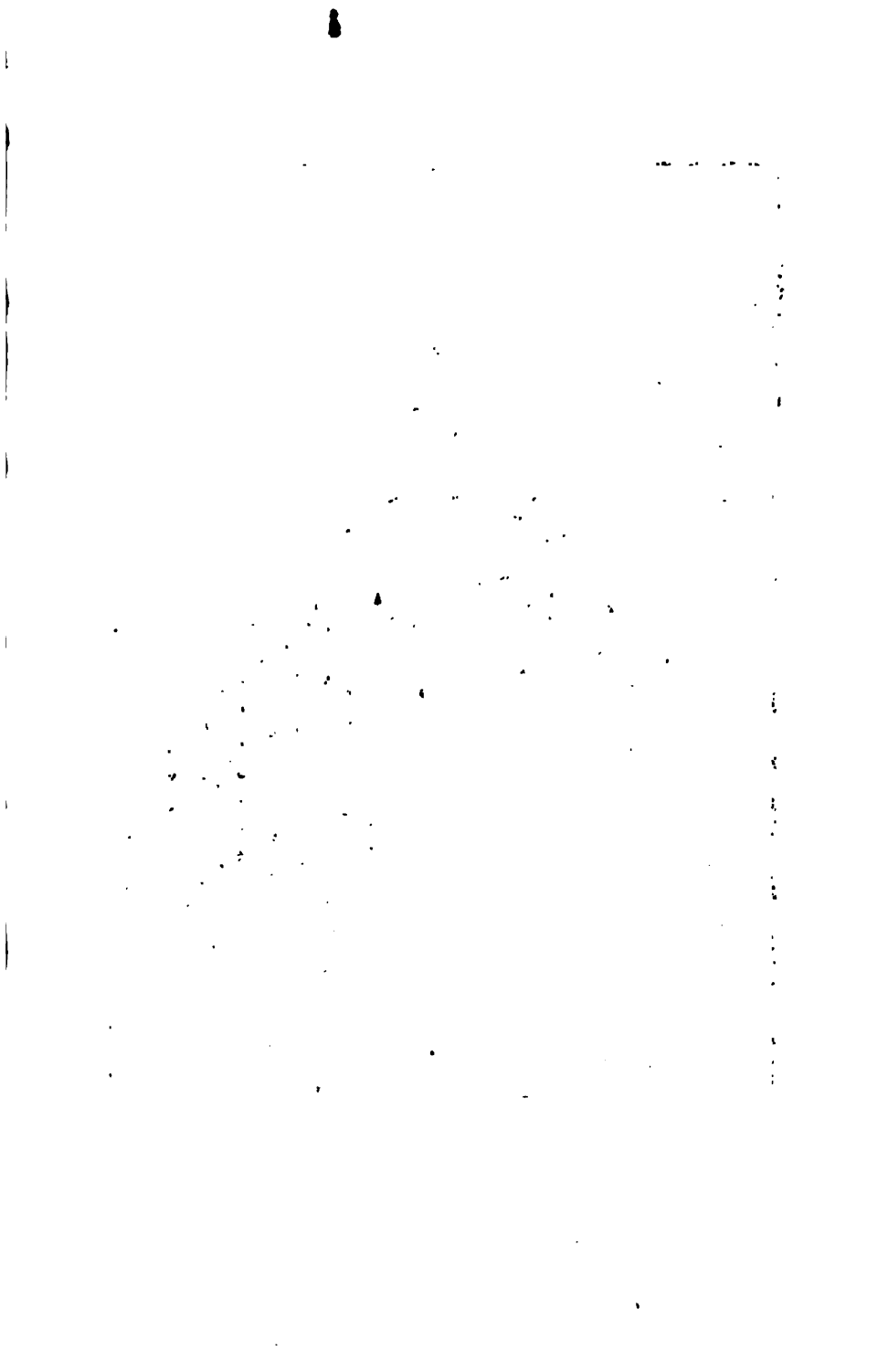
The queen, much moved, rose immediately, and despite the prayers of the Princesse de Guémené, the tears of Marie de Gonzaga, and the cries of Madame de Chevreuse, insisted upon placing herself at the window, and half opened it, leaning upon the shoulder of the Duchesse de Mantua.

"What do I hear?" she said. "They are crying 'Long live the king! Long live the queen!'"

The people, imagining they recognized her, redoubled their cries at this moment, and shouted louder than ever, "Down with the cardinal! Long live M. le Grand!"

Marie shuddered.

"What is the matter with you?" said the queen, observing her. But as she did not answer, and trembled in every limb, this good and gentle princess appeared not to perceive it; and paying the greatest attention to the cries and movements of the populace, she even exaggerated an inquietude which she had not felt since the first name had reached her ear. An hour after, when they came to tell her that the crowd only awaited a sign from her hand to withdraw, she waved it gra-



THE ALCOVE

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ciously, and with an air of satisfaction. But this joy was far from being complete, for her heart was still troubled by many things, and, above all, by the presentiment of the regency. The more she leaned forward to show herself, the more she beheld the revolting scenes which the increasing light exhibited. Terror took possession of her soul as it became necessary to appear calm and confiding; and her heart was saddened at the very gayety of her words and countenance. Exposed to all eyes, she felt herself a woman, and shuddered in looking at that people whom she would soon perhaps have to govern, and who already took upon themselves to demand the death of ministers, and to call upon their queen to appear before them.

She saluted them.

A hundred and fifty years after, that salute was repeated by another princess, like herself of Austrian blood, and Queen of France. The monarchy without basis, such as Richelieu made it, was born and died between these two salutes.

The princess at last closed her windows, and hastened to dismiss her timid suite. The thick curtains fell again over the barred windows; and the chamber was no longer lighted by a day which was odious to her. Large white wax *flambeaux* burned in candelabra, in the form of golden arms, which stood out from the framed and flowered tapestries with which the walls were covered. She remained alone with Marie de Mantua; and re-entering with her the enclosure which was formed by the royal balustrade, she fell in a reclining posture upon her bed, fatigued by her courage and

her smiles, and burst into tears, her head supported by her pillow. Marie, on her knees upon a velvet footstool, held one of her hands in both hers, and without daring to speak first, leaned her head tremblingly upon it; for until that moment, a tear had never been seen in the queen's eyes.

They remained thus for some minutes. The princess, then raising herself up by a painful effort, spoke, —

"Do not afflict yourself, my child; let me weep. 'T is such a relief to one who reigns! If you pray to God for me, ask him to grant me sufficient strength not to hate the enemy who pursues me everywhere, and who will destroy the royal family of France and the monarchy by his measureless ambition. I recognize him in all that has just taken place; I see him in this tumultuous revolt."

"What, Madame! is he not at Narbonne? — for it is the cardinal of whom you speak, no doubt; and have you not heard that these cries were for you, and against him?"

"Yes, *mon amie*, he is three hundred leagues away from us, but his fatal genius watches at the door. If these cries have been heard, it is because he has allowed them; if these men were assembled, it is because they have not yet reached the hour which he has destined for their destruction. Believe me, I know him; and I have dearly paid for the knowledge of that dark soul. It has cost me all the power of my rank, the pleasures of my age, the affections of my family, and even the heart of my husband. He has isolated me from the whole world. He now confines me within a barrier of honors

and respect; and formerly he dared, to the scandal of all France, to bring an accusation against myself. They examined my papers, they interrogated me, they made me sign myself guilty, and ask the king's pardon for a fault of which I was ignorant; and I owed to the devotion, and the perhaps eternal imprisonment of a faithful servant,[1] the preservation of this casket which you have saved for me. I read in your looks that you think me too fearful; but do not deceive yourself as all the court now does. Be sure, my dear child, that this man is everywhere, and that he knows even our thoughts."

"What, Madame! does he know all that these men have cried under your windows, and the names of those who sent them?"

"Yes; no doubt he knows it, or has foreseen it. He permits it; he authorizes it to compromise me in the king's eyes, and keep him eternally separated from me. He would complete my humiliation."

"But the king has not loved him for two years; he loves another."

The queen smiled; she gazed some time in silence upon the pure and open features of the beautiful Marie, and her look, full of candor, which was languidly raised towards her. She smoothed back the black ringlets which shaded her noble forehead, and seemed to rest her eyes and her soul in looking at that charming innocence displayed upon so lovely a face. She kissed her cheek, and resumed,—

[1] He was called Laporte. Neither the fear of torture nor the hope of the cardinal's gold could draw from him one word of the queen's secrets.

"You do not suspect, my poor girl, a sad truth. It is that the king loves no one, and that those who appear the most in favor will be the soonest abandoned by him, and thrown to him who engulfs and devours all."

"Ah, *mon Dieu!* what is this you tell me?"

"Know you how many he has destroyed?" continued the queen, in a low voice, and looking into her eyes as if to read in them all her thoughts, and to make her own penetrate there. "Know you the end of his favorites? Have you been told of the exile of Baradas; of that of Saint-Simon; of the convent of Mademoiselle de la Fayette, the shame of Madame d'Hautfort, the death of Chalais? All have fallen before an order from Richelieu to his master. Without this favor, which you mistake for friendship, their life would have been peaceful. But this favor is mortal; it is a poison. Look at this tapestry which represents Sémélé. The favorites of Louis XIII. resemble that woman; his attachment devours like this fire, which dazzles and consumes her."

But the young duchesse was no longer in a condition to listen to the queen. She continued to fix her large dark eyes upon her, dimmed by a veil of tears; her hands trembled in those of Anne of Austria, and her lips quivered with convulsive agitation.

"I am very cruel, am I not, Marie?" continued the queen, in an extremely sweet voice, and caressing her like a child from whom one would draw an avowal. "Oh, yes; no doubt I am very wicked! Your heart is full; you cannot bear it, my child. Come, tell me; how stands it with you and M. de Cinq-Mars?"

At this word grief found a passage, and still on her

knees at the queen's feet, Marie in her turn shed upon the bosom of the good princess a deluge of tears, with childish sobs and so violent an agitation of her head and her fine shoulders that it seemed as though her heart would break. The queen waited a long time for the end of this first movement, rocking her in her arms as if to appease her grief, frequently repeating, "My child, my child, do not afflict yourself thus!"

"Ah, Madame!" she exclaimed, "I have been guilty towards you; but I did not reckon upon that heart. I have done wrong, and I shall perhaps be punished severely for it. But, alas! how shall I venture to speak to you, Madame? It was not so much to open my heart to you that was difficult; it was to avow to you that I had need to read there myself."

The queen considered a moment as if to reflect; placing her finger upon her lips, "You are right," she then replied; "you are quite right. Marie, it is always the first word which is the most difficult to say; and that difficulty often destroys us. But it must be so; and without this tenacity one would be often wanting in dignity. Ah, how difficult it is to reign! Here I would descend into your heart, but I come too late to do you good."

Marie de Mantua hung her head without making any answer.

"Must I encourage you to speak?" said the queen. "Must I remind you that I have almost adopted you for my eldest daughter; that after having sought to unite you with the king's brother, I prepared for you the throne of Poland? Must I do more, Marie? Yes, I

must, I will. If afterwards you do not bare your whole heart to me, I have misjudged you. Open this golden casket; here is the key. Open it fearlessly; do not tremble as I do."

The Duchesse de Mantua obeyed with hesitation, and beheld in this little chased coffer a knife of rude form, the handle of which was of iron, and the blade very rusty. It lay upon some letters carefully folded, upon which was the name of Buckingham. She would have lifted them up; Anne of Austria stopped her.

"Seek nothing further," she said; "that is all the treasure of the queen. And it is one; for it is the blood of a man who lives no longer, but who lived for me. He was the most beautiful, the bravest, the most illustrious of the nobles of Europe. He covered himself with the diamonds of the English crown to please me. He raised up a fierce war and armed fleets, which he himself commanded, that he might have the happiness of once fighting him who was my husband. He traversed the seas to gather a flower upon which I had trod, and ran the risk of death to kiss and bathe with his tears the foot of this bed in the presence of two of my ladies-in-waiting. Shall I say more? Yes, I will say it to you, — I loved him. I love him still in the past more than I could love him in the present. He never knew it, never divined it. This face, these eyes were marble towards him, while my heart burned and was breaking with grief; but I was the Queen of France!" Here Anne of Austria forcibly grasped Marie's arm. "Dare now to complain," she continued, "if you have not yet ventured to speak to me of your

love, and dare now to be silent when I have told you these things!"

"Ah, yes, Madame, I shall dare to confide my grief to you, since you are to me —"

"A friend, a woman!" interrupted the queen. "I was a woman in my terror, which put you in possession of a secret unknown to the whole world. I am a woman by a love which survives the man I loved. Speak; tell me! It is now time."

"It is too late, on the contrary," replied Marie, with a forced smile. "M. de Cinq-Mars and myself are united forever."

"Forever!" exclaimed the queen. "Can you mean it? And your rank, your name, your future, — is all lost? Do you reserve this despair for your brother, the Duc de Bethel, and all the Gonzagas?"

"For more than four years I have thought of it. I am resolved; and for ten days we have been affianced."

"Affianced!" exclaimed the queen, clasping her hands. "You have been deceived, Marie. Who would have dared this without the king's order? It is an intrigue which I will know. I am sure that you have been misled and deceived."

Marie hesitated a moment, and then said, —

"Nothing was more simple, Madame, than our attachment. I inhabited, you know, the old château of Chaumont, with the Maréchale d'Effiat, the mother of M. de Cinq-Mars. I had retired there to weep for the death of my father; and it soon happened that he had to deplore the loss of his. In this numerous afflicted family, I saw his grief only, which was as profound as mine. All that

he said, I had already thought, and when we spoke of our afflictions we found them wholly alike. As I had been the first to suffer, I was better acquainted with sorrow than he; and I endeavored to console him by telling him all that I had suffered, so that in pitying me he forgot himself. This was the commencement of our love, which, as you see, took its birth, as it were, between two tombs."

"God grant, *ma chère*, that it may have a happy termination!" said the queen.

"I hope so, Madame, since you pray for me," continued Marie. "Besides, everything now smiles upon me; but at that time I was very miserable. The news arrived one day at the château that the cardinal had called M. de Cinq-Mars to the army. It seemed to me that I was again deprived of one of my relatives; and yet we were strangers. But M. de Bassompierre spoke without ceasing of battles and death. I retired every evening in grief, and I wept during the night. I at first thought that my tears flowed for the past, but I soon perceived that it was for the future; and I felt that they could not be the same tears, since I wished to conceal them. Some time passed in the expectation of his departure. I saw him every day; and I pitied him for having to depart, because he repeated to me every instant that he would have wished to live eternally as he then did, in his country and with us. He was thus without ambition until the day of his departure, because he knew not whether he was — whether he was —"

Marie blushed, cast down her humid eyes, and smiled.

"Well!" said the queen, "whether he was beloved, — is it not so?"

"And in the evening, Madame, he left, ambitious."

"That is evident, certainly. He left," said Anne of Austria, somewhat relieved; "but he has been back two years, and you have seen him?"

"Seldom, Madame," said the young duchesse, proudly; "and always in the presence of the priest, before whom I have promised to be the wife of no other than Cinq-Mars."

"Is it really, then, a marriage? Have they dared to do it? I shall inquire. But, Heaven, what faults! how many faults in the few words I have heard! Let me reflect upon them."

And speaking aloud to herself, the queen continued, her eyes and head bent down in the attitude of reflection:

"Reproaches are useless and cruel if the evil is done. The past is no longer ours; let us think of the future. Cinq-Mars is brave, able, and even profound in his ideas. I have observed that he has made a great way in two years, and I now see that it was for Marie. He comports himself well; he is worthy of her in my eyes, but not so in the eyes of Europe. He must rise yet higher. The Princesse de Mantua cannot, may not marry less than a prince. He must become one. Of myself I can do nothing; I am not the queen, I am the neglected wife of the king. There is only the cardinal, the eternal cardinal, and he is his enemy; and perhaps this disturbance —"

"Alas! it is the commencement of the war between them. I saw it at once."

"He is then lost!" exclaimed the queen, embracing Marie. "Pardon, my child, for thus afflicting you; but in times like these we must see all and say all. Yes, he is lost if he does not himself overthrow this wicked man,—for the king will not renounce him; force alone —"

"He will overthrow him, Madame. He will do it, if you assist him. You are the divinity of France. Oh, I conjure you, protect the angel against the demon! It is your cause, that of your royal family, that of all your nation."

The queen smiled.

"It is, above all, your cause, my child; and it is as such that I will embrace it to the utmost extent of my power. It is not great, I have told you; but such as it is, I lend it to you entirely, provided, however, that this *angel* does not stoop to commit mortal sins," added she, with a meaning look. "I heard his name pronounced this night by voices most unworthy of him."

"Oh, Madame, I would swear that he knows nothing of it!"

"Ah, my child, do not speak of State affairs. You are not yet learned enough in them. Let me sleep, if I can, before the hour of my toilet. My eyes are burning, and yours also, perhaps."

Saying these words, the amiable queen reclined her head upon the pillow which covered the casket, and soon Marie saw her fall asleep through utter fatigue. She then rose, and seating herself in a great tapestried square armchair, joined her hands upon her knees, and began to reflect upon her painful situation. Consoled

by the aspect of her gentle protectress, she often raised her eyes to watch her slumber, and sent her in secret all the blessings which love ever showers upon those who protect it, sometimes kissing the tresses of her blond hair, as if by this kiss she could convey to her soul all the ideas favorable to the thought ever present to her mind.

The queen's slumber was prolonged, while Marie thought and wept. However, she remembered that at ten o'clock she must appear at the royal toilet before all the court. She resolved to cast aside reflection, to dry her tears, and took a thick folio volume placed upon a table inlaid with enamel and medallions; it was the "Astrée" of M. d'Urfé, — a work *de belle galanterie* adored by the fair prudes of the court. The unsophisticated and straightforward mind of Marie could not enter into these pastoral loves. She was too simple to understand the "bergers du Lignon," too clever to be pleased at their discourse, and too impassioned to feel their tenderness. However, the great *vogue* of the romance so far influenced her that she sought to compel herself to take an interest in it; and accusing herself internally every time that she felt the ennui which exhaled from the pages of the book, she ran through it with impatience to find something to please and transport her. An engraving arrested her attention. It represented the shepherdess Astrée with high-heeled shoes, a corset, and an immense *vertugadin*, raising herself upon her toe to watch floating down the river the tender Celadon, drowning himself in despair at having been somewhat coldly received in the morning. Without explaining to herself the

reason of the taste and accumulated fallacies of this picture, she sought, in turning over the pages, a word which could fix her attention; she saw that of "Druid."

"Ah! here is a great character," said she. "I shall no doubt see one of those mysterious sacrificers of whom Britain, I am told, still preserves the raised monuments; but I shall see him sacrificing men. That would be a spectacle of horror; however, let us read it."

Saying this, Marie read with repugnance, knitting her brows, and nearly trembling, the following: —

"The Druid Adamas delicately called the shepherds Pimandre, Ligdamont, and Clidamant, newly arrived from Calais. 'This adventure cannot terminate,' said he, 'but by the extremity of love. The soul, when it loves, transforms itself into the object beloved; it is to represent this that my agreeable enchantments will show you in this fountain the nymph Sylvia, whom you all three love. The high-priest Amasis is about to come from Montbrison, and will explain to you the delicacy of this idea. Go, then, gentle shepherds! If your desires are well regulated, they will not cause you any torments; and if they are not so, you will be punished by faintings similar to those of Celadon, and the shepherdess Galatea, whom the inconstant Hercules abandoned in the mountains of Auvergne, and who gave her name to the tender country of the Gauls; or you will be stoned by the shepherdesses of Lignon, as was the ferocious Amidor. The great nymph of this cave has made an enchantment.'"

The enchantment of the great nymph was complete on the princess, who had scarcely sufficient strength to find out with a trembling hand, towards the end of the book, that the Druid Adamas was an *ingenious allegory*,

figuring the lieutenant-general of Montbrison, of the family of the Papons. Her weary eyes closed, and the great book slipped from her dress to the cushion of velvet upon which her feet were placed, and where the beautiful Astrée and the gallant Celadon reposed luxuriously, less immovable than Marie de Mantua, vanquished by them and by profound sleep.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CONFUSION.

Saint Jacques Major. Esse point moy ?
Saint Jehan. Ou moy aussi ?
Saint Pierre. Ou moy qui suis icy assis ?
Saint Andre. Esse moy ?
Saint Simon. Suis-je point celuy ?
Saint Jude. Esse point moy ?
Saint Thomas. Ou moi aussi ?

Ancien Mystère.

DURING this same morning, the various circumstances of which we have seen in the apartments of Gaston d'Orléans and of the queen, the calm and silence of study reigned in a modest cabinet of a large house near the Palais de Justice. A bronze lamp, of a gothic shape, struggling with the coming day, threw its red light upon a mass of papers and books which covered a large table; it lighted the bust of L'Hospital, that of Montaigne, of the historian the President de Thou, and of King Louis XIII. A chimney sufficiently vast for a man to enter, and even to sit there, was occupied by a large fire burning upon enormous andirons. Upon one

of these was placed the foot of the studious De Thou, who, already risen, examined with attention the new works of Descartes and Grotius. He was writing upon his knee his notes upon these books of philosophy and politics, which were then the general subjects of conversation; but at this moment, the "Méditations Metaphysiques" absorbed all his attention. The philosopher of Touraine enchanted the young counsellor. Often, in his enthusiasm, he struck upon the book, uttering exclamations of admiration; sometimes he took a sphere placed near him, and turning it some time with his fingers, abandoned himself to the most profound reveries of science; then led by them to a still greater elevation of mind, he would suddenly throw himself upon his knees before a crucifix, placed upon the chimney-piece, because at the limits of the human mind he had found God. At other times he buried himself in his great armchair, so as to be nearly sitting upon his shoulders, and placing his two hands upon his eyes, followed in his head the trace of the reasoning of René Descartes, from this idea of the first meditation —

"Suppose that we are asleep, and that all these particularities — namely, that we open our eyes, move our heads, spread our arms — are nothing but false illusions" —

to this sublime conclusion of the third: —

"There remains only one thing to be said; it is that like the idea of myself, that of God is born and produced with me from the time I was created. And certainly it should not be thought strange that God, in creating me, should have placed in me this idea, to be, as it were, the mark of the workman impressed upon his work."

These thoughts entirely occupied the mind of the young counsellor, when a loud noise was heard under the windows. He thought that some house on fire excited these prolonged cries, and hastened to look towards the wing of the building occupied by his mother and sisters; but all appeared to sleep there, and the chimneys did not even send forth any smoke, to attest that its inhabitants were even awake. He blessed Heaven for it; and running to another window, he saw the people, whose exploits we have witnessed, hastening towards the narrow streets which led to the quay. After having examined this rabble rout of women and children, the ridiculous flag which led them, and the rude disguises of the men, "It is some popular fête or some carnival comedy," said he; and again returning to the corner of the fire, he placed a large almanac upon the table, and carefully sought in it what saint was fêted that day. He looked in the column of the month of December; and finding at the fourth day of this month the name of Saint Barbe, he remembered that he had seen several small cannons and barrels pass, and perfectly satisfied with the explanation which he had given himself, hastened to drive away the interruption which had called off his attention, and resumed his gentle studies, rising only sometimes to take a book from the shelves of his library, and, after having read in it a phrase, a line, or only a word, threw it from him upon his table or on the floor, covered in this way with books or papers which he would not occupy himself in returning to their places, lest he should break the thread of his reveries.

All at once the door was hastily opened, and a name was announced which he had distinguished among those at the bar,—a man whom his connections with the magistracy had made personally known to him.

"And by what chance, at five o'clock in the morning, do I see M. Fournier?" he cried. "Are there some unfortunates to defend, some families to be supported by the fruits of his talent, some error to dissipate in us, some virtue to awaken in our hearts? for these are of his accustomed works. You come, perhaps, to inform me of some fresh humiliation of our parliament. Alas! the secret chambers of the Arsenal are more powerful than the ancient magistracy of Clovis. The parliament is on its knees; all is lost, unless it is directly filled with men like yourself."

"Monsieur, I do not merit your praise," said the advocate, entering, accompanied by a grave and aged man, enveloped like himself in a large cloak. "I deserve, on the contrary, your censure; and I am almost a penitent, as is M. le Comte du Lude whom you see here. We come to ask an asylum for the day."

"An asylum! and against whom?" said De Thou, making them sit down.

"Against the lowest people in Paris, who will have us for chiefs, and from whom we fly. 'T is odious; the sight, the smell, the ear, and the touch, above all, are too severely wounded by it," said M. du Lude, with a comical gravity. "It is too much!"

"Ah! too much, you say?" said De Thou, very much astonished, but not willing to show it.

"Yes," answered the advocate; "really, between ourselves, M. le Grand goes too far."

"Yes, he advances things too fast. He will render all our projects abortive," added his companion.

"Ah! and you say he goes too far?" replied M. de Thou, rubbing his chin, more and more surprised.

It was three months since his friend Cinq-Mars had been to see him; and he, without feeling much disquieted about it, — knowing that he was at St. Germain in high favor, and never quitting the king, — was far removed from the news of the court. Given up to his grave studies, he never heard of public events till they were forced upon his attention. He knew nothing of current life until the last moment, and often amused his intimate friends by his naïve astonishment, — the more so that from a little worldly vanity he desired to have it appear as though he were fully acquainted with the course of events, and tried to conceal the surprise he experienced at every fresh intelligence. He was now in this situation, and to this vanity was added the feeling of friendship; he would not have it supposed that Cinq-Mars had been negligent towards him, and, for his friend's honor even, would appear to be informed of his projects.

"You know very well how far we have proceeded," continued the advocate.

"Yes, of course. Well?"

"Intimate as you are with him, you cannot be ignorant that all has been organizing for a year past."

"Certainly, all has been organizing; but proceed."

"You will admit with us that M. le Grand is wrong?"

"Ah, ah, that is as it may be ; but explain yourself. I shall see."

"Well, you know upon what we had agreed at the last conference of which he informed you ?"

"Ah ! that is to say — pardon me, I perceive it nearly ; but set me a little upon the track."

"'T is useless ; you no doubt remember what he himself recommended us to do at Marion de Lorme's ?"

"To add no one to our list," said M. du Lude.

"Ah, yes, yes ! I understand," said De Thou ; "that appears reasonable, very reasonable, truly."

"Well," continued Fournier, "he himself has infringed this agreement ; for this morning, besides the ragamuffins whom that ferret the Abbé de Gondi brought to us, there was some vagabond captain, who during the night struck with sword and poniard gentlemen of both parties, crying out at the top of his voice, '*À moi*, D'Aubijoux ! You gained three thousand ducats from me ; here are three sword-thrusts for you. *À moi*, La Chapelle ! I will have ten drops of your blood in exchange for my ten pistoles !' and I myself saw him attack these gentlemen and many more of both sides, loyally enough, it is true, — for he only struck them in front and on their guard, — but with great success, and with a most revolting impartiality."

"Yes, Monsieur, and I was going to tell him my opinion," interposed Du Lude, "when I saw him escape through the crowd like a squirrel, laughing greatly with some ill-looking men with dark swarthy faces ; I do not doubt, however, that M. de Cinq-Mars sent him, for he gave orders to that Ambrosio whom you must know, —

that Spanish prisoner, that rascal whom he has taken for a servant. In faith, I am disgusted with all this; and I was not born to be mixed up with this canaille."

"This, sir," replied Fournier, "is very different from the affair at Loudun. There the people only rose, without actually revolting; it was the sensible and estimable part of the populace, indignant at an assassination, and not heated by wine and money. It was a cry raised against an executioner, — a cry of which one could be the honorable organ, — and not these howlings of factious hypocrisy, of a mass of unknown people, the dregs of the mud and sewers of Paris. I confess that I am very tired of what I see; and I have come to entreat you to speak about it to M. le Grand."

De Thou was very much embarrassed during this conversation, and sought in vain to understand what Cinq-Mars could have to do with the people, who appeared to him merely merry-making; on the other hand, he persisted in not owning his ignorance. It was, however, entire; for the last time he had seen his friend, he had spoken only of the king's horses and stables, of hawking, and of the importance of the king's huntsmen in the affairs of the State, which did not seem to announce vast projects in which the people could take a part. He at last timidly ventured to say, —

"Messieurs, I promise to do your commission; meanwhile, I offer you my table and beds as long as you please. But to give my advice in this matter is very difficult. By the way, it was not the fête of Saint Barbe I saw this morning?"

"The Saint Barbe!" said Fournier.

"The Saint Barbe!" echoed Du Lude. "They burned powder."

"Oh, yes, yes! that is what M. de Thou means," said Fournier, laughing; "very good, very good indeed! Yes, I think to-day is Saint Barbe."

De Thou was now altogether confused and reduced to silence; as for the others, seeing that they did not understand him, nor he them, they had recourse to silence.

They were sitting thus mute, when the door opened to admit the old tutor of Cinq-Mars, the Abbé Quillet, who entered, limping somewhat. He looked very gloomy, retaining none of his former gayety in his air or language; but his look was still animated, and his speech energetic.

"Pardon me, my dear De Thou, that I so early derange you in your occupations; it is strange, is it not, in a gouty invalid? Ah, time advances; two years ago I did not limp. I was, on the contrary, nimble enough at the time of my journey to Italy; but then fear gives legs as well as wings."

Then going into the recess of a window, he signed De Thou to come to him.

"I need hardly remind you, my friend, who are in their secrets, that I affianced them a fortnight ago, as they have told you."

"Ah, indeed! whom?" exclaimed poor De Thou, fallen from the Charybdis into the Scylla of astonishment.

"Come, come, don't affect surprise; you know very well whom," continued the abbé. "But, faith, I fear I have been too complying with them, though these two

children are really interesting in their love. I fear for him more than for her; I doubt not he is acting very foolishly, judging from the disturbance this morning. We must consult together about it."

"But," said De Thou, very gravely, "upon my honor, I do not know what you mean. Who is acting foolishly?"

"Now, my dear sir, will you still play the mysterious with me? It is really insulting," said the worthy man, beginning to be angry.

"No, indeed, I mean it not; whom have you affianced?"

"Again! fie, sir!"

"And what was the disturbance this morning?"

"You are mocking me! I take my leave," said the abbé, rising.

"I vow that I understand not a word of all that has been told me to-day. Do you mean M. de Cinq-Mars?"

"Very well, sir, very well! you treat me as a Cardinalist; very well, we part," said the Abbé Quillet, now altogether furious. And he snatched up his crutch and quitted the room hastily, without listening to De Thou, who followed him to his carriage, seeking to pacify him, but without effect, because he did not wish to name his friend upon the stairs in the hearing of his servants, and could not explain the matter otherwise. He had the annoyance of seeing the old abbé depart, still in a passion; he called out to him amicably, "To-morrow," as the coachman drove off, but got no answer.

It was, however, not uselessly that he had descended to the foot of the stairs, for he saw thence hideous groups

of the mob returning from the Louvre, and was thus better able to judge of the importance of their movements in the morning; he heard rude voices exclaiming, as in triumph, —

"She showed herself, however, the little queen!" — "Long live the good Duc de Bouillon, who is coming to us! He's got a hundred thousand men with him, all on rafts on the Seine. The old Cardinal de la Rochelle is dead! Long live the king! Long live M. le Grand!"

The cries redoubled at the arrival of a carriage and four, with the royal livery, which stopped at the counsellor's door, and in which De Thou recognized the equipage of Cinq-Mars; Ambrosio alighted to open the ample curtains, which the carriages of that period had for doors. The people threw themselves between the carriage-steps and the door of the house, so that Cinq-Mars had an absolute struggle ere he could get out and disengage himself from the market-women, who sought to embrace him, vociferating, —

"Here you are, then, my duck, my dear! Here you are, my pet! Ah, how handsome he is, the love, with his big collar! Is n't he worth half a dozen of the other fellow with the white mustache? Come, my son, bring us out some good wine this morning."

Henri d'Effiat pressed, blushing deeply the while, his friend's hand, who hastened to have his doors closed.

"This popular favor is a cup one must drink," said he, as they ascended the stairs.

"It appears to me," replied De Thou, gravely, "that you drink it even to the very dregs."

"I will explain all this clamorous affair to you," an-

swered Cinq-Mars, somewhat embarrassed. "At present, if you love me, dress yourself to accompany me to the queen's toilet."

"I promised you blind adherence," said the counsellor; "but truly I cannot keep my eyes shut much longer, if —"

"Once again, I will give you a full explanation as we return from the queen. But make haste; it is nearly ten o'clock."

"Well, I will go with you," replied De Thou, conducting him into his cabinet, where were the Comte du Lude and Fournier, while he himself passed into his dressing-room.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE TOILET.

Qu'il est doux d'être belle alors qu'on est aimée.

DELPHINE GAY.

THE grand écuyer's carriage rolled rapidly towards the Louvre, when, closing the curtain, he took his friend's hand, and said to him with emotion, —

"Dear De Thou, I have kept great secrets in my heart, and believe me, they have sat heavily there; but two fears impelled me to silence, — that of your danger, and — shall I say it? — that of your counsels."

"Yet you well know," replied De Thou, "that I despise the first; and I thought that you did not despise the second."

"No, but I feared them; I still fear them. I would not be stopped. Do not speak, my friend; not a word, I conjure you, before you have heard and seen all that is about to take place. I will go back with you to your house on quitting the Louvre; there I will listen to you, and thence I shall go to continue my work, for nothing

will shake my resolution, I warn you. I have just said so to the gentlemen at your house."

Cinq-Mars had in his accent nothing of the rudeness which might be implied from his words. His voice was conciliatory, his look gentle, amiable, affectionate, his air as tranquil as it was determined. There was no indication of the slightest effort over himself. De Thou remarked it, and sighed.

As he descended from the carriage with him, he followed him up the great staircase of the Louvre. When they entered the queen's apartment, announced by two ushers dressed in black and bearing ebony rods, she was seated at her toilet. This was a sort of table of black wood, inlaid with tortoise-shell, mother-of-pearl, and brass, in an infinity of designs of very bad taste, but which give to all this sort of furniture an air of grandeur which we still admire in it. A mirror, rounded at the top, which the ladies of our time would consider small and insignificant, stood in the middle of the table, with scattered jewels and necklaces. Anne of Austria, seated before it in a large armchair of crimson velvet, with long gold fringe, was as motionless and grave as on her throne, while Dona Stefania and Madame de Motteville, on either side, lightly touched her beautiful blond hair with a comb, as if finishing the queen's coiffure, which, however, was already perfectly arranged and decorated with pearls. Her long tresses, though light, were exquisitely glossy, manifesting that to the touch they must be fine and soft as silk. The daylight fell without a shade upon her forehead, which had no reason to dread the test, itself reflecting an almost equal

light from its surpassing fairness, which the queen was pleased thus to display. Her blue eyes, blended with green, were large and regular, and her vermilion mouth had that under-lip of the princesses of Austria, somewhat prominent and slightly cleft, in the form of a cherry, which may still be marked in all the female portraits of this time, whose painters seemed to have aimed at imitating the queen's mouth, in order to please the women of her suite, whose desire was, no doubt, to resemble her. The black dress then adopted by the court, and of which the form was even fixed by an edict, set off the ivory of her arms, bare to the elbow, and ornamented with a profusion of lace, which flowed from her loose sleeves. Large pearls hung in her ears and from her girdle. Such was the appearance of the queen at this moment. At her feet, upon two velvet cushions, a boy of four years old was playing with a little cannon, which he was assiduously breaking in pieces. This was the dauphin, afterwards Louis XIV. The Duchesse Marie de Gonzaga was seated on her right hand upon a stool. The Princesse de Gueméné, the Duchesse de Chevreuse, and Mademoiselle de Montbazon, Mesdemoiselles de Guise, de Rohan, and de Vendome, all beautiful and brilliant in youth, were behind her, standing. In the recess of a window, Monsieur, his hat under his arm, was talking in a low voice with a man, stout, with a red face and a steady and daring eye. This was the Duc de Bouillon. An officer of about twenty-five years old, well-formed, and of agreeable features, had just given several papers to the prince, which the Duc de Bouillon appeared to be explaining to him.

De Thou, after having saluted the queen, who said a few words to him, approached the Princesse de Gueméné, and conversed with her in an undertone, with an air of affectionate intimacy, but all the while intent upon his friend's interest; and secretly trembling lest he should have confided his destiny to a being less worthy of him than he wished, he examined the Princesse Marie with the scrupulous attention, the scrutinizing eye of a mother examining the woman whom her son has selected for his bride, — for he thought that Marie could not be altogether a stranger to the enterprise of Cinq-Mars. He saw with dissatisfaction that her dress, which was extremely elegant, appeared to inspire her with more vanity than became her on such an occasion. She was incessantly rearranging upon her forehead and her hair the rubies which ornamented her head, and which scarcely equalled the brilliancy and animated color of her complexion. She looked frequently at Cinq-Mars; but it was rather the look of coquetry than that of love, and her eyes often glanced towards the mirror on the toilet, in which she watched the symmetry of her beauty. These observations of the counsellor began to persuade him that he was mistaken in imagining her to be the bride of Cinq-Mars, especially when he saw that she seemed to have a pleasure in sitting at the queen's side, while the duchesses stood behind her, and that she often looked haughtily at them.

"In that heart of nineteen," said he, "love, were there love, would reign alone and above all to-day. It is not she!"

The queen made an almost imperceptible movement

of the head to Madame de Gueméné. After the two friends had spoken a moment with each person present, and at this sign, all the ladies except Marie de Gonzaga, making profound courtesies, quitted the apartment without speaking, as if by previous arrangement. The queen, then herself turning her chair, said to Monsieur, —

"My brother, I beg you will come and sit down by me. We will consult upon what I have already told you. The Princesse Marie will not be in the way. I begged her to remain. We have no interruption to apprehend."

The queen seemed more at ease in her manner and language; and no longer preserving her severe and ceremonious immobility, she signed to the other persons present to approach her.

Gaston d'Orléans, somewhat alarmed at this solemn opening, came carelessly, sat down on her right hand, and said with a half-smile and a negligent air, playing with his ruff and the chain of the Saint Esprit which hung from his neck, —

"I think, Madame, that we shall fatigue the ears of so young a personage by a long conference. She would rather hear us speak of dances, and of marriage, of an elector, or of the King of Poland, for example."

Marie assumed a disdainful air; Cinq-Mars frowned.

"Pardon me," replied the queen, looking at her; "I assure you the politics of the present time interest her much. Do not seek to escape us, my brother," added she, smiling. "I have you to-day! It is the least we can do to listen to M. de Bouillon."

The latter approached, holding by the hand the young officer of whom we have spoken.

"I must first," said he, "present to your Majesty the Baron de Beauvau, who has just arrived from Spain."

"From Spain?" said the queen, with emotion. "There is courage in that; you have seen my family?"

"He will speak to you of them, and of the Count-Duke of Olivarès. As to courage, it is not the first time he has shown it. He commanded the cuirassiers of the Comte de Soissons."

"How? so young, sir! You must be fond of political wars."

"On the contrary, your Majesty will pardon me," replied he, "for I served with the *princes of the peace.*"

Anne of Austria smiled at this *jeu-de-mot.* The Duc de Bouillon, seizing the moment to bring forward the grand question he had in view, quitted Cinq-Mars, to whom he had just given his hand with an air of the most zealous friendship, and approaching the queen with him, "It is miraculous, Madame," said he, "that this period still contains in its bosom some noble characters, such as these;" and he pointed to the master of the horse, to young Beauvau, and to De Thou. "It is only in them that we can place our hope for the future. Such men are indeed very rare now, for the great leveller has passed a long scythe over France."

"Is it of Time you speak," said the queen, "or of a real personage?"

"Too real, too living, too long living, Madame!" replied the duc, becoming more animated; "but his meas-

ureless ambition, his colossal selfishness can no longer be endured. All those who have noble hearts are indignant at this yoke; and at this moment, more than ever, we see misfortunes threatening us in the future. It must be said, Madame, — yes, it is no longer time to blind ourselves to the truth, or to conceal it, — the king's illness is serious. The moment for thinking and resolving has arrived, for the time to act is not far distant."

The severe and abrupt tone of M. de Bouillon did not surprise Anne of Austria; but she had always seen him more calm, and was therefore somewhat alarmed by the disquietude he betrayed. Quitting accordingly the tone of pleasantry which she had at first adopted, she said, —

"How! what fear you, and what would you do?"

"I fear nothing for myself, Madame, for the army of Italy or Sedan will always secure my safety; but I fear for you, and perhaps for the princes, your sons."

"For my children, M. le Duc, for the sons of France? Do you hear him, my brother, and do you not appear astonished?"

The queen was deeply agitated.

"No, Madame," said Gaston d'Orléans, calmly; "you know that I am accustomed to persecution. I am prepared to expect anything from that man. He is master; we must be resigned."

"He master!" exclaimed the queen. "And from whom does he hold his powers, if not from the king? And after the king, what hand will sustain him, so please you? Who will prevent him from again returning to nothing? Will it be you or I?"

"It will be himself," interrupted M. de Bouillon, "for he seeks to be named regent; and I know that at this moment he contemplates taking your children from you, and requiring the king to confide them to his care."

"Take them from me!" cried the mother, involuntarily seizing the dauphin, and taking him in her arms.

The child, standing between the queen's knees, looked at the men who surrounded him with a gravity very singular for his age, and seeing his mother in tears, placed his hand upon the little sword he wore.

"Ah, Monseigneur," said the Duc de Bouillon, bending half down to address to him what he intended for the princess, "it is not against us that you must draw your sword, but against him who is undermining your throne. He prepares a mighty power for you, no doubt. You will have an absolute sceptre; but he has broken the armed fasces which sustained it. That fasces was your ancient nobility, whom he has decimated. When you are king, you will be a great king. I foresee it; but you will only have subjects, and no friends, for friendship exists only in independence and a kind of equality which takes its rise in force. Your ancestors had their peers; you will not have yours. May God aid you then, Monseigneur, for man may not do it without institutions! Be great; but above all, around you, a great man, let there be others as strong, so that if the one stumbles, the whole monarchy may not fall."

The Duc de Bouillon had a warmth of expression and a confidence of manner which captivated those who heard him. His valor, his keen perception in the field, the profundity of his political views, his knowledge of

the affairs of Europe, his reflective and decided character, all rendered him one of the most capable and imposing men of his time, — the only one, indeed, whom the cardinal-duc really feared. The queen always listened to him with confidence, and allowed him to acquire a sort of empire over her. She was now more deeply moved than ever.

"Ah, would to God," she exclaimed, "that my son's mind was ripe for your counsels, and his arm strong enough to profit by them! Until that time, however, I will listen, I will act for him. It is I who should be, and it is I who shall be, regent. I will not resign this right but with my life. If we must make war, we will make it; for I will do everything but submit to the shame and terror of yielding up the future Louis XIV. to this crowned subject. Yes," she went on, coloring and closely pressing the young dauphin's arm, "yes, my brother, and you gentlemen, counsel me! Speak! how do we stand? Must I depart? Speak openly. As a woman, as a wife, I could have wept my so mournful position; but now see, as a mother, I do not weep. I am ready to give you orders if it be necessary."

Never had Anne of Austria looked so beautiful as at this moment; and the enthusiasm she manifested electrified all those present, who needed but a word from her mouth to speak. The Duc de Bouillon cast a glance upon Monsieur, which decided him.

"*Ma foi!*" said he, with deliberation, "if you give orders, my sister, I will be your captain of the guards, on my honor, for I too am weary of the vexations occasioned me by this knave, who still dares to persecute

me and seeks to break off my marriage and still keeps my friends in the Bastille, or has them assassinated from time to time; and besides, I am indignant," said he, recollecting himself and assuming a more solemn air, — "I am indignant at the misery of the people."

"My brother," returned the princess, energetically, "I take you at your word, for with you, one must do so; and I hope that together we shall be strong enough for the purpose. Do only as M. le Comte de Soissons did, but survive your victory. Side with me, as you did with M. de Montmorency, but leap the ditch."

Gaston felt the point of this. He called to mind the well-known incident when the unfortunate rebel of Castelnaudary leaped almost alone a large ditch, and found on the other side seventeen wounds, a prison, and death in the sight of Monsieur, who remained motionless with his army. In the rapidity of the queen's enunciation he had not time to examine whether she had employed this expression proverbially or with a direct reference; but at all events, he decided not to notice it, and was indeed prevented from doing so by the queen, who continued, looking at Cinq-Mars, —

"But, above all, no panic-terror! Let us know exactly where we are, M. le Grand. You have just left the king. Is there fear with you?"

D'Effiat had not ceased to observe Marie de Gonzaga, whose expressive countenance exhibited to him all her ideas far more rapidly and more surely than words. He read there the desire that he should speak, — the desire that he should confirm the prince and the queen. An impatient movement of her foot conveyed to him her

will that the thing should be accomplished, the conspiracy arranged. His face became pale and more pensive; he collected his thoughts for a moment, for he felt that his destiny was in that hour. De Thou looked at him and trembled, for he knew him well. He would fain have said one word to him, only one word; but Cinq-Mars had already raised his head. He spoke,—

"I do not think, Madame, that the king is so ill as you suppose. God will long preserve to us this prince. I hope so; I am even sure of it. He suffers, it is true, suffers much; but it is his soul more peculiarly that is sick, and of an evil which nothing can cure,—of an evil which one would not wish to one's greatest enemy, and which would gain him the pity of the whole world if it were known. The end of his misery — that is to say of his life — will not be granted him for a long time. His languor is entirely moral. There is in his heart a great revolution going on; he would accomplish it, and cannot. He has felt for many long years growing within him the seeds of a just hatred against a man to whom he thinks he owes gratitude, and it is this internal combat between his natural goodness and his anger that devours him. Every year that has passed has deposited at his feet, on one side, the great works of this man, and on the other, his crimes. It is the last which now weigh down the balance. The king sees them and is indignant; he would punish, but all at once he stops and weeps. If you could witness him thus, Madame, you would pity him. I have seen him seize the pen which was to sign his exile, dip it into the ink with a bold hand, and use it — for what? — to congratulate him on some recent

success. He at once applauds himself for his goodness as a Christian, curses himself for his weakness as a sovereign judge, despises himself as a king. He seeks a refuge in prayer, and plunges into meditation on the future; then he rises terrified because he has seen in his thought the flames which this man merits, and which no one knows better than he how deeply he merits. You should hear him in these moments accuse himself of a guilty weakness, and exclaim that he shall himself be punished for not having known how to punish. One would say that there are spirits which order him to strike, for his arms are raised as he sleeps. In a word, Madame, the storm murmurs in his heart, but burns none but himself. The lightning cannot escape."

"Well, then, let us fire it!" exclaimed the Duc de Bouillon.

"He who touches it may die of the contact," said Monsieur.

"But what a noble devotion!" cried the queen.

"How I should admire the hero!" said Marie, in a half-whisper.

"I will do it," answered Cinq-Mars.

"*We* will do it," said M. de Thou, in his ear.

Young Beauvau had approached the Duc de Bouillon.

"Monsieur," said he, "do you forget what follows?"

"No, *pardieu!* I do not forget it," replied the latter, in a low voice; then addressing the queen, "Madame," said he, "accept the offer of M. le Grand. He is more in a position to decide the king than either you or I; but hold yourself prepared, for the cardinal is too wary

to be caught sleeping. I do not believe in his illness. I have no faith in the silence and immobility of which he has sought to persuade us these two years past. I would not believe in his death even, unless I had myself thrown his head into the sea, like that of the giant in Ariosto. Hold yourself ready to meet all contingencies, and let us, meanwhile, hasten our operations. I have shown my plans to Monsieur just now; I will give you a summary of them. I offer you Sedan, Madame, for yourself, and for Messeigneurs, your sons. The army of Italy is mine; I will recall it if necessary. M. le Grand is master of half the camp of Perpignan. All the old Huguenots of La Rochelle and the South are ready to come to him at the first nod. All has been organized for a year past, by my care, to meet events."

"I should not hesitate," said the queen, "to place myself in your hands, to save my children, if any misfortune should happen to the king. But in this general plan you forget Paris."

"It is ours on every side; the people by the archbishop, without his suspecting it, and by M. de Beaufort, who is its king; the troops by your guards and those of Monsieur, who shall be chief in command, if he please."

"Me! me! oh, that positively cannot be! I have not enough people, and I must have a retreat stronger than Sedan," said Gaston.

"It suffices for the queen," replied M. de Bouillon.

"Ah, that may be! but my sister does not risk so much as a man who draws the sword. Do you know these are bold measures you propose?"

"What, even if we have the king on our side?" asked Anne of Austria.

"Yes, Madame, yes; we do not know how long that may last. We must make ourselves sure; and I do nothing without the treaty with Spain."

"Do nothing, then," said the queen, coloring deeply; "for certainly I will never hear that spoken of."

"And, yet, Madame, it were more prudent, and Monsieur is right," said the Duc de Bouillon; "for the Count-Duke of San Lucra offers us seventeen thousand men, tried troops, and five hundred thousand crowns in ready money."

"What!" exclaimed the queen, with astonishment, "have you dared to proceed so far without my consent? already treaties with foreigners!"

"Foreigners, my sister! could we imagine that a princess of Spain would use that word?" said Gaston.

Anne of Austria rose, taking the dauphin by the hand; and leaning upon Marie, "Yes, sir," she said, "I am a Spaniard; but I am the granddaughter of Charles V., and I know that a queen's country is where her throne is. I leave you, gentlemen; proceed without me. I know nothing of the matter for the future."

She advanced some steps, but seeing Marie pale and bathed in tears, she returned.

"I will, however, solemnly promise you inviolable secrecy; but nothing more."

All were mentally disconcerted, except the Duc de Bouillon, who, not willing to lose the advantages he had gained, said to her, bowing respectfully,—

"We are grateful for this promise, Madame, and we

ask no more, persuaded that after the first success you will be entirely with us."

Not wishing to engage in a war of words, the queen courtesied somewhat less coldly, and quitted the apartment with Marie, who cast upon Cinq-Mars one of those looks which comprehend at once all the emotions of the soul. He seemed to read in her beautiful eyes the eternal and mournful devotion of a woman who has given herself up forever; and he felt that if he had once thought of withdrawing from his enterprise, he should now have considered himself the basest of men.

As soon as the two princesses had disappeared, "There, there! I told you so, Bouillon, you offend the queen," said Monsieur; "you went too far. You cannot certainly accuse me of having been hesitating this morning. I have, on the contrary, shown more resolution than I ought to have done."

"I am full of joy and gratitude towards her Majesty," said M. de Bouillon, with a triumphant air; "we are sure of the future. What will you do now, M. de Cinq-Mars?"

"I have told you, sir; I draw not back, whatever the consequences. I will see the king; I will run every risk to obtain his assent."

"And the treaty with Spain?"

"Yes, I —"

De Thou seized Cinq-Mars by the arm, and advancing suddenly, said with a solemn air, —

"We have decided that it shall be only signed after the interview with the king; for should his Majesty's

just severity towards the cardinal dispense with it, we have thought it better not to expose ourselves to the discovery of so dangerous a treaty."

M. de Bouillon frowned.

"If I did not know M. de Thou," said he, "I should have regarded this as a defection; but from him —"

"Sir," replied the counsellor, "I think I may engage myself, on my honor, to do all that M. le Grand does; we are inseparable."

Cinq-Mars looked at his friend, and was astonished to see upon his mild countenance the expression of sombre despair; he was so struck with it that he had not the courage to gainsay him.

"He is right, gentlemen," he said with a cold but kindly smile; "the king will perhaps spare us much trouble. We may do good things with him. For the rest, Monseigneur, and you, M. le Duc," he added with immovable firmness, "fear not that I shall ever draw back. I have burned all the bridges behind me. I must advance; the cardinal's power shall fall, or my head."

"It is strange, very strange!" said Monsieur; "I see that every one here is farther advanced in the conspiracy than I imagined."

"Not so, sir," said the Duc de Bouillon; "we prepared only that which you might please to accept. Observe that there is nothing in writing. You have but to speak, and nothing exists or ever has existed; according to your order, the whole thing shall be a dream or a volcano."

"Well, well, I am content, if it must be so," said Gaston; "let us occupy ourselves with more agreeable

topics. Thank God we have a little time before us! I confess I wish that it were all over. I am not fitted for violent emotions; they affect my health," he added, taking M. de Beauvau's arm. "Tell us if the Spanish women are still pretty, young man. It is said you are a great gallant among them. *Tudieu!* I 'm sure you 've got yourself talked of there. They tell me the women wear enormous petticoats. Well, I am not at all against that; they make the foot look smaller and prettier. I 'm sure the wife of Don Louis de Haro is not handsomer than Madame de Gueméné; is she? Come, be frank; I 'm told she looks like a nun. Ah! you do not answer; you are embarrassed. She has then taken your fancy; or you fear to offend our friend M. de Thou in comparing her with the beautiful Gueméné. Well, let 's talk of the customs; the king has a charming dwarf I 'm told, and they put him in a pie. He is a fortunate man, that King of Spain! I don't know another equally so. And the queen, she is still served on bended knee, is she not? Ah! that is a good custom; we have lost it. It is very unfortunate, — more unfortunate than may be supposed."

And Gaston d'Orléans had the confidence to speak in this tone nearly half an hour, with a young man whose serious character was not at all adapted to such conversation, and who, still occupied with the importance of the scene he had just witnessed and the great interests which had been discussed, made no answer to this torrent of idle words. He looked at the Duc de Bouillon with an astonished air, as if to ask him whether this was really the man whom they were going to place at

the head of the most audacious enterprise that had been commenced for a long time; while the prince, without appearing to perceive that he remained unanswered, replied to himself, speaking with volubility, as he drew him gradually out of the room. He feared that one of the gentlemen present might recommence the terrible conversation about the treaty; but none desired to do so, unless it were the Duc de Bouillon, who, however, preserved an angry silence. As for Cinq-Mars, he had been led away by De Thou, under cover of the chattering volley of Monsieur, who took care not to appear to notice their departure.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SECRET.

Et prononcés ensemble, à l'amitié fidèle,
Nos deux noms fraternels serviront de modèle.

A. SOUMET, *Clytemnestre.*

DE THOU had reached home with his friend; his doors were carefully shut, and orders given to admit no one, and to excuse him to the refugees for allowing them to depart without seeing them again; and as yet the two friends had not spoken to each other.

The counsellor had thrown himself into his armchair in deep meditation. Cinq-Mars, seated in the tall chimney-place, awaited with a serious and sorrowful air the termination of this silence. At length De Thou, looking fixedly at him and crossing his arms, said in a hollow and melancholy voice, —

"This, then, is what you have come to! these, then, are the results of your ambition! You are about to banish, perhaps to slay a man, and to bring a foreign army into France; I am, then, to see you an assassin and a traitor to your country! By what paths have you

arrived thus far? By what degrees have you descended so low?"

"Any other than yourself would not speak thus to me twice," said Cinq-Mars, coldly; "but I know you, and I like this explanation. I desired it, and sought it. You shall see my entire soul. I had at first another thought, a better one perhaps, more worthy of our friendship, more worthy of friendship, — friendship, the second thing upon earth."

He raised his eyes to heaven as he spoke, as if he there sought this divinity.

"Yes, it would have been better. I intended to have said nothing to you on this subject. It was a painful task to keep that silence; but hitherto I have succeeded. I wished to have conducted the whole enterprise without you; to show you only the finished work. I wished to keep you out of the circle of my danger; but shall I confess my weakness? I feared to die, if I have to die, misjudged by you. I can well endure the idea of the world's malediction, but not of yours; but this has decided me upon avowing all to you."

"What! and but for this thought, you would have had the courage to conceal yourself forever from me? Ah, dear Henri, what had I done that you should take this care of my life? By what fault have I merited to survive you, if you die? You have had the strength of mind to deceive me during two whole years; you have never presented to me aught of your life but its flowers; you have never entered my solitude but with a joyous countenance, and each time with a fresh favor. Ah, you must be very guilty or very virtuous!"

"Do not seek in my soul more than it contains. Yes, I have deceived you; and therein was the only tranquil joy I had in the world. Forgive me for having stolen these moments from my destiny, so brilliant, alas! I was happy in the happiness you supposed me to enjoy; I made you happy in that dream, and I am only guilty now that I am about to destroy it, and to show myself as I was. Listen: I shall not detain you long; the story of an impassioned heart is ever simple. Once before, I remember, in my tent when I was wounded, my secret had nearly escaped me; it would have been happy, perhaps, had it done so. Yet what would counsel have availed me? I should not have adopted it. In a word, 'tis Marie de Gonzaga whom I love."

"How! she who is to be Queen of Poland?"

"If she is queen, it can only be after my death. But listen: for her I became a courtier; for her I have almost reigned in France; and for her I am about to fall — perhaps to die."

"Die! fall! when I have been reproaching your triumph! when I have wept over the sadness of your victory!"

"Ah! you but ill know me if you suppose that I should be the dupe of Fortune, when she smiles upon me; if you suppose that I have not seen to the bottom of my destiny! I struggle against it, but 'tis the stronger I feel it. I have undertaken a task beyond human power; and I shall fail in it."

"Why, then, not stop? What is the use of intellect in the business of the world?"

"None; unless indeed it be to tell us the cause of our

fall, and to enable us to foresee the day on which we shall fall. I cannot now recede. When a man is confronted with such an enemy as Richelieu, he must overcome him or be crushed by him. To-morrow I shall strike the last blow; did I not just now, in your presence, engage to do so?"

"And it is that very engagement that I would oppose. What confidence have you in those to whom you thus abandon your life? Have you not read their secret thoughts?"

"I know them all; I have read their hopes through their feigned rage; I know that they tremble while they threaten. I know that even now they are ready to make their peace by giving me up; but it is my part to sustain them and to decide the king. I must do it, for Marie is my betrothed, and my death is written at Narbonne. It is voluntarily, it is with a full knowledge of my fate, that I have thus placed myself between the scaffold and supreme happiness. That happiness I must tear from the hands of Fortune, or die on that scaffold. At this instant I experience the joy of having broken through all doubt. What! blush you not at having thought me ambitious from a base egoism, like this cardinal, — ambitious from a puerile desire for a power which is never satisfied? I am ambitious, but it is because I love. Yes, I love; and in that word all is comprised. But I accuse you unjustly. You have embellished my secret intentions; you have imparted to me noble designs (I remember them), high political conceptions. They are brilliant, they are grand, doubtless; but — shall I say it to you? — those vague projects for the perfection-

ating of corrupt societies seem to me to crawl far below the devotion of love. When the whole soul vibrates full of that one thought, it has no room for the nice calculation of general interests; the topmost heights of the earth are far beneath heaven."

De Thou shook his head.

"What can I answer?" he said. "I do not understand you; your reasoning unreasons you. You hunt a shadow."

"Ay," continued Cinq-Mars; "far from destroying my strength, this inward fire has developed it. I have calculated everything. A slow course has led me to the end which I am about to attain. Marie held me by the hand; could I retreat? I would not have done it though a world faced me. Hitherto, all has gone well; but an invisible barrier arrests me. This barrier must be broken; it is Richelieu. I but now in your presence undertook to do this; but perhaps I was too hasty. I now think I was so. Let him rejoice; he expected me. Doubtless he foresaw that it would be the youngest whose patience would first fail. If he played on this calculation, he played well. Yet, but for the love that has precipitated me on, I should have been stronger than he, and by just means."

Then a sudden change came over the face of Cinq-Mars. He turned pale and red twice; and the veins of his forehead rose like blue lines drawn by an invisible hand.

"Yes," he added, rising, and clasping together his hands with a force which indicated violent despair concentred in his heart, "all the torments with which love

can tear its victims I have in my breast. This timid girl, for whom I would shake empires, for whom I have suffered all, even the favor of a prince, who perhaps has not felt all I have done for her, cannot yet be mine. She is mine before God, yet I am estranged from her; nay, I must hear daily discussed before me which of the thrones of Europe will best suit her, in conversations wherein I may not even raise my voice to give an opinion, and in which they scorn for her princes of the blood royal, who yet have precedence far before me. I must conceal myself like a culprit to hear through a grating the voice of her who is my wife; in public I must bow before her, — her husband, yet her servant! 'T is too much; I cannot live thus. I must take the last step, whether it raise me or hurl me down."

"And for your personal happiness you would overthrow a State?"

"The happiness of the State concurs with mine. I secure that undoubtedly in destroying the tyrant of the king. The horror with which this man inspires me has passed into my very blood. When I was first on my way to him, I encountered in my journey his greatest crime. He is the genius of evil for the unhappy king! I will exorcise him. I might have become the genius of good for Louis XIII. It was one of the thoughts of Marie, her most cherished thought. But I do not think I shall triumph in the uneasy soul of the prince."

"Upon what do you rely, then?" said De Thou.

"Upon the cast of a die. If his will can this once last for a few hours, I have gained. 'T is a last calculation on which my destiny hangs."

"And that of your Marie!"

"Could you suppose it?" said Cinq-Mars, impetuously. "No, no! If he abandons me, I sign the treaty of Spain, and then — war!"

"Ah, horror!" exclaimed the counsellor. "What, a war! a civil war, and a foreign alliance!"

"Ay, 't is a crime," said Cinq-Mars, coldly; "but have I asked you to participate in it?"

"Cruel, ungrateful man!" replied his friend; "can you speak to me thus? Know you not, have I not proved to you, that friendship holds the place of every passion in my heart? Can I survive the least of your misfortunes, far less your death? Still, let me influence you not to strike France. Oh, my friend! my only friend! I implore you on my knees, let us not thus be parricides; let us not assassinate our country! I say *us*, because I will never separate myself from your actions. Preserve to me my self-esteem, for which I have labored so long; sully not my life and my death, which I have devoted to you."

De Thou had fallen at the feet of his friend, who, unable to preserve his affected coldness, threw himself into his arms, as he raised him, and pressing him to his heart, said in a stifled voice, —

"Why love me thus? What have you done, friend? Why love me? You who are wise, pure, and virtuous; you who are not led away by an insensate passion and the desire for vengeance; you whose soul is nourished only by religion and science, — why love me? What has my friendship given you but anxiety and pain? Must it now heap dangers on you? Separate yourself from

me; we are no longer of the same nature. You see courts have corrupted me. I have no longer openness, no longer goodness. I meditate the ruin of a man; I can deceive a friend. Forget me, scorn me. I am not worthy of one of your thoughts; how should I be worthy of your perils?"

"By swearing to me not to betray the king and France," answered De Thou. "Know you that the preservation of your country is at stake; that if you yield to Spain our fortifications, she will never return them to you; that your name will be a horror to posterity; that French mothers will curse it when they shall be forced to teach their children a foreign language, — know you all this? Come."

And he drew him towards the bust of Louis XIII.

"Swear before him (he is your friend also), swear never to sign this infamous treaty."

Cinq-Mars lowered his eyes, but with inflexible tenacity answered, although he blushed as he did so, —

"I have said it; if they force me to it, I will sign."

De Thou turned pale, and let fall his hand. He took two turns in his room, his arms crossed, in inexpressible anguish. At last he advanced solemnly towards the bust of his father, and opened a large book standing at its foot; he turned to a page already marked, and read aloud: —

"I think, therefore, that M. de Lignebœuf was justly condemned to death by the parliament of Rouen, for not having revealed the conspiracy of Catteville against the State."

...me same manner. You see
...have no longer open me...
...what's the mean of a me... I
...me, scorn me. I... it
...rs; now shall I... worthy

...ed to betray the king...
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...is at stake, that if you...
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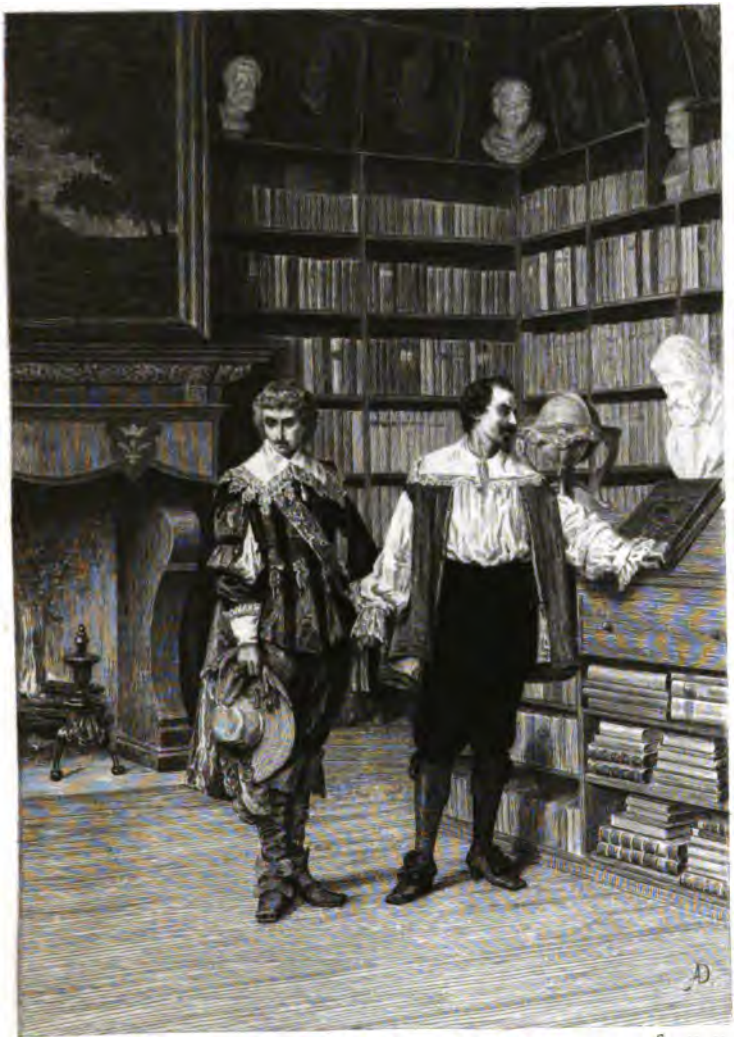

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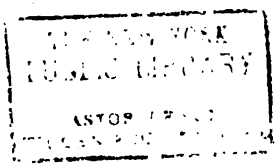
THE SECRET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Then keeping the book respectfully opened in his hand, and contemplating the image of the President de Thou, whose "Memoirs" he held, he continued,—

"Yes, my father, you thought well. I shall be a criminal, I shall merit death; but can I do otherwise? I will not denounce this traitor, because that also would be treason; and he is my friend, and he is unhappy."

Then advancing towards Cinq-Mars, and again taking his hand, he said,—

"I do much for you in acting thus; but expect nothing further from me, sir, if you sign this treaty."

Cinq-Mars was moved to the heart's core by this scene, for he felt all that his friend must suffer in casting him off. Checking, however, the tears which were rising to his smarting lids, and embracing De Thou tenderly, he exclaimed,—

"Ah, De Thou, I find you still perfect. Yes, you do me a service in alienating yourself from me, for if your lot had been linked to mine, I should not have dared to dispose of my life. I should have hesitated to sacrifice it in case of need; but now I shall assuredly do so. And I repeat to you, if they force me, I will sign the treaty with Spain."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE HUNTING PARTY.

On a bien de grâces à rendre à son étoile quand on peut quitter les hommes sans être obligé de leur faire du mal et de se déclarer leur ennemi. — CH. NODIER, *Jean Sbogar*.

MEANWHILE the illness of the king threw France into a consternation which unsettled States ever feel on the approach of the death of princes. Although Richelieu was the centre of the monarchy, he only reigned in the name of Louis XIII., and as enveloped with the splendor of that name which he had aggrandized. Absolute as he was over his master, he still feared him; and this fear reassured the nation against his ambitious desires, of which the king himself was the fixed barrier. But this prince dead, what would the imperious minister do? Where would that man stop who had already dared so much? Accustomed to wield the sceptre, who would prevent him from still bearing it, and from inscribing his name alone at the foot of the laws which he alone should dictate? These terrors agitated all minds. The

people in vain looked throughout the kingdom for those colossuses of the nobility, at the feet of whom it had been wont to find shelter in political storms. It now only saw their recent tombs. The parliaments were dumb; and men felt that nothing could be opposed to the monstrous growth of this usurping power. No one was entirely deceived by the affected sufferings of the minister. None were touched with that feigned agony which had too often deceived the public hope; and distance nowhere prevented the weight of the finger of the dreaded *parvenu* from being felt.

The love of the people soon revived towards the son of Henri IV. They hastened to the churches; they prayed, and often even wept. Unfortunate princes are always loved. The melancholy of Louis, and his mysterious sorrow, interested all France; and still living, they already regretted him, as if each man had wished to have been the depositary of his troubles ere he carried away with him the grand secret of what is suffered by the men placed so high that they can see nothing before them but their tomb.

The king, wishing to reassure the whole nation, announced the temporary re-establishment of his health, and ordered the court to prepare for a grand hunting party to be given at Chambord, — a royal domain, whither his brother, the Duc d'Orléans, prayed him to return.

This beautiful abode was the favorite retreat of the king, doubtless because, in harmony with his feelings, it combined grandeur with sadness. He often passed whole months there, without seeing any one whatsoever,

incessantly reading and re-reading mysterious papers, writing unknown matters, which he locked up in an iron coffer, of which he alone had the key. He sometimes delighted in being served by a single domestic, and thus so forget himself by the absence of his suite as to live for many days together like a poor man or an exiled citizen, loving to figure to himself misery or persecution, in order the better to enjoy royalty afterwards. Another time he would be in a more entire solitude; and having forbidden any human creature to approach him, clothed in the habit of a monk, he would shut himself up in the vaulted chapel. There, reading the life of Charles V., he would imagine himself at St. Just, and chant over himself that Mass for the dead which brought death upon the head of the Spanish monarch. But in the midst of these very chants and meditations, his feeble mind was pursued and distracted by contrary images. Never did life and the world appear to him more fair than in solitude among the tombs. Between his eyes and the page which he endeavored to read passed brilliant processions, victorious armies, or nations transported with love. He saw himself powerful, combating, triumphant, adored; and if a ray of the sun through the large windows fell upon him, suddenly rising from the foot of the altar, he felt himself carried away by a thirst for daylight and the open air, which led him from his gloomy retreat. But returned to real life, he found there once more disgust and ennui, for the first men he met recalled his power to his recollection by their homage. It was then that he believed in friendship, and called it to his side; but scarcely was he certain of

its possession than an unconquerable scruple suddenly seized upon his soul. It was that of a too powerful attachment to the creature, turning him from the Creator, or more frequently an inward reproach for removing himself too much from the affairs of the State. The object of his momentary affection then seemed to him a despotic being, whose power drew him from his duties; but unfortunately for his favorites, he had not the strength of mind outwardly to manifest towards them the resentment he felt, and thus to warn them of their danger, but continuing to caress them, added by this constraint fuel to the secret fire of his heart, and was impelled to absolute hatred of them. There were moments when he was capable of going to any lengths against them.

Cinq-Mars perfectly knew the weakness of that mind, which could not keep firmly in any path, and the weakness of that heart, which could neither wholly love nor wholly hate. Thus the position of favorite, the envy of all France, the object of jealousy even on the part of the great minister, was so precarious and so painful that but for his love, he would have burst his golden chains with greater joy than a galley-slave feels when he sees the last ring that for two long years he has been filing with a steel spring concealed in his mouth, fall to the earth. This impatience to meet the fate he saw so near, hastened the explosion of that patiently excavated mine, as he had declared to his friend; but his situation was then that of a man who, placed by the side of the book of life, should see passing over it the hand which is to trace out his damnation or his salvation. He set

out with Louis to Chambord, resolved to take the first opportunity favorable to his design. It soon presented itself.

The very morning of the day appointed for the chase, the king sent word to him that he was waiting for him on the Escalier du Lys. It may not, perhaps, be profitless to speak of this astonishing construction.

Four leagues from Blois, and one league from the Loire, in a small and very deep valley, between marshy swamps and a wood of large oaks, far from any high-road, the traveller suddenly comes upon a royal, or rather magic castle. It might be said that compelled by some wonderful lamp, a genie of the East had carried it off during one of the "thousand and one nights," and had brought it from the country of the sun to conceal it in the land of fogs and mist, as the abode of the mistress of a handsome prince. This palace is hidden like a treasure; but with its blue domes, its elegant minarets rising from thick walls or shooting into the air, its long terraces overlooking the wood, its light spires waving with the wind, its crescents everywhere rising over its colonnades, one might imagine one's self in the kingdom of Bagdad or of Cachmire, did not their blackened walls, with their covering of moss and ivy, and the pallid and melancholy hue of the sky, denote a rainy climate. It was indeed a genius who raised this building; but he came from Italy, and his name was Primaticcio. It was indeed a handsome prince whose amours were concealed in it; but he was a king, and he was named François I. His Salamander still spouts fire everywhere about it. It sparkles in a thousand places on the arched roofs,

and multiplies the flames there like the stars of heaven; it supports the capitals with its burning crown; it colors the windows with its fires; it meanders up and down the secret staircases, and everywhere seems to devour with its flaming glances the triple crescent of a mysterious Diane, — that Diane de Poitiers, twice a goddess and twice adored in these voluptuous woods.

The base of this strange monument is like the monument itself, full of elegance and mystery; there is a double staircase, which rises in two interwoven spirals from the most remote foundations of the edifice up to the highest points, and ends in a lantern or small lattice-work cabinet, surmounted by a colossal *fleur-de-lis*, visible from a great distance. Two men may ascend it at the same moment, without seeing each other.

This staircase alone seems like a little isolated temple. Like our churches, it is sustained and protected by the arcades of its thin, light, transparent, open-work wings. One would think the docile stone had given itself to the finger of the architect; it seems, so to speak, kneaded according to the slightest caprice of his imagination. One can hardly conceive how the plans were traced, in what terms the orders were explained to the workmen. The whole thing appears a transient thought, a brilliant revery that at once assumed a durable form, — the realization of a dream.

Cinq-Mars was slowly ascending the broad stairs which led him to the king's presence, and stopping longer at each step, in proportion as he approached him, either from disgust at the idea of seeing the prince whose daily complaints he had to listen to, or thinking

of what he was about to do, when the sound of a guitar struck his ear. He recognized the beloved instrument of Louis and his sad, feeble, and trembling voice faintly re-echoing from the vaulted ceiling. Louis seemed trying one of those romances which he was wont to compose, and several times repeated an incomplete strain with a trembling hand. The words could scarcely be distinguished; all that Cinq-Mars heard were a few such as *Abandon, ennui du monde, et belle flamme.*

The young favorite shrugged his shoulders as he listened.

"What new chagrin moves thee?" he said. "Come, let me again attempt to read that chilled heart which thinks it needs something."

He entered the narrow cabinet.

Clothed in black, half reclining on a couch, his elbows resting upon pillows, the prince was languidly touching the chords of his guitar; he ceased this when he saw the grand écuyer enter, and raising his large eyes to him with an air of reproach, swayed his head to and fro for a long time without speaking. Then in a plaintive but emphatic tone he said, —

"What do I hear, Cinq-Mars? What do I hear of your conduct? How much do you pain me by forgetting all my counsels! You have formed a guilty intrigue; was it from you I was to expect such things, — you whom I so loved for your piety and virtue?"

Full of his political projects, Cinq-Mars thought himself discovered, and could not help a momentary anxiety; but, perfectly master of himself, he answered without hesitation, —

"Yes, Sire; and I was about to declare it to you, for I am accustomed to open my soul to you."

"Declare it to me!" exclaimed the king, turning red and white, as under the shivering of a fever; "and you dare to contaminate my ears with these horrible avowals, sir, and to speak so calmly of your disorder! Go! you deserve to be condemned to the galley, like Rondin; it is a crime of high treason you have committed in your want of faith towards me. I had rather you were a coiner, like the Marquis de Coucy, or at the head of the Croquants, than do as you have done; you dishonor your family, and the memory of the maréchal your father."

Cinq-Mars, deeming himself wholly lost, put the best face he could upon the matter, and said with an air of resignation, —

"Well, then, Sire, send me to be judged and put to death; but spare me your reproaches."

"Do you insult me, you petty country-squire?" answered Louis. "I know very well that you have not incurred the penalty of death in the eyes of men; but it is at the tribunal of God, sir, that you will be judged."

"Heavens, Sire!" replied the impetuous young man, whom the insulting phrase of the king had offended, "why do you not allow me to return to the province you so much despise, as I have sought to do a hundred times? I will go there. I cannot support the life I lead with you; an angel could not bear it. Once more, let me be judged if I am guilty, or allow me to return to Touraine. It is you who have ruined me in attaching me to your person. If you have caused me to conceive lofty hopes,

which you afterwards overthrew, is that my fault? Wherefore have you made me grand écuyer, if I was not to rise higher? In a word, am I your friend or not? and, if I am, why may I not be duc, peer, or even constable, as well as M. de Luynes, whom you loved so much because he trained falcons for you? Why am I not admitted to the council? I could speak as well as any of the old ruffs there; I have new ideas, and a better arm to serve you. It is your cardinal who has prevented you from summoning me there. And it is because he keeps you from me that I detest him," continued Cinq-Mars, clinching his fist, as if Richelieu stood before him; "yes, I would kill him with my own hand, if need were."

D'Effiat's eyes were inflamed with anger; he stamped his foot as he spoke, and turned his back to the king, like a sulky child, leaning against one of the columns of the cupola.

Louis, who recoiled before all resolution, and who was always terrified by the irreparable, took his hand.

O weakness of power! O caprices of the human heart! it was by this childish impetuosity, these very defects of his age, that this young man governed the King of France as effectually as did the first politician of the time. This prince believed, and with some show of reason, that a character so hasty must be sincere; and even his fiery rage did not anger him. It did not apply to the real subject of his reproaches, and he could well pardon him for hating the cardinal. The very idea of his favorite's jealousy of the minister pleased him, because it indicated attachment; and all he dreaded was

his indifference. Cinq-Mars knew this, and had desired to make it a means of escape, preparing the king to regard all that he had done as child's play, as the consequence of his friendship for him; but the danger was not so great, and he breathed freely when the prince said to him, —

"The cardinal is not in question here. I love him no more than you do; but it is with your scandalous conduct I reproach you, and which I shall have much difficulty to pardon in you. What, sir! I learn that instead of devoting yourself to the pious exercises to which I have accustomed you, when I fancy you are at your *Salut* or your *Angelus*, — you are off from St. Germain, and go to pass a portion of the night — with whom? Dare I speak of it without sin? With a woman lost in reputation, who can have no relations with you but such as are pernicious to the safety of your soul, and who receives free-thinkers at her house, — in a word, Marion de Lorme. What have you to say? Speak."

Leaving his hand in that of the king, but still leaning against the column, Cinq-Mars answered, —

"Is it then so culpable to leave grave occupations for others more serious still? If I go to the house of Marion de Lorme, it is to hear the conversation of the learned men who assemble there. Nothing is more harmless than these meetings. Readings are given there which, it is true, sometimes extend far into the night, but which commonly tend to exalt the soul, so far from corrupting it. Besides, you have never commanded me to account to you for all that I do; I should have informed you of this long ago if you had desired it."

"Ah, Cinq-Mars, Cinq-Mars! where is your confidence? Do you feel no need of it? It is the first condition of a perfect friendship, such as ours ought to be, such as my heart requires."

The voice of Louis became more affectionate, and the favorite, looking at him over his shoulder, assumed an air less angry, but still simply *ennuyé*, and resigned to listening to him.

"How often have you deceived me!" continued the king; "can I trust myself to you? Are they not fops and gallants whom you meet at the house of this woman? Do not courtesans go there?"

"Heavens! no, Sire; I often go there with one of my friends, — a gentleman of Touraine, named René Descartes."

"Descartes! I know that name! Yes, he is an officer who distinguished himself at the siege of Rochelle, and who dabbles in writing; he has a good reputation for piety, but he is connected with Desbarreaux, who is a free-thinker. I am sure that you must mix with many persons who are not fit company for you, many young men without family, without birth. Come, tell me whom saw you last there?"

"Truly, I can scarcely remember their names," said Cinq-Mars, looking at the ceiling; "sometimes I do not even ask them. There was, in the first place, a certain M. — M. Groot, or Grotius, a Hollander."

"I know him, a friend of Barnevelt; I pay him a pension. I liked him well enough; but the card — but I was told that he was a high Calvinist."

"I also saw an Englishman, named John Milton; he

is a young man just come from Italy, and is returning to London. He scarcely speaks at all."

"I don't know him, — not at all; but I'm sure he's some other Calvinist. And the Frenchmen, who were they?"

"The young man who wrote 'Cinna,' and who has been thrice rejected at the Academie Éminente; he was angry that Du Ryer occupied his place there. He is called Corneille."

"Well," said the king, folding his arms, and looking at him with an air of triumph and reproach, "I ask you who are these people? Is it in such a circle that you ought to be seen?"

Cinq-Mars was confounded at this observation, which hurt his self-pride, and approaching the king, he said, —

"You are right, Sire; but there can be no harm in passing an hour or two in listening to good conversation. Besides, many courtiers go there, such as the Duc de Bouillon, M. d'Aubijoux, the Comte de Brion, the Cardinal de la Vallette, MM. de Montrésor, Fontrailles; men illustrious in the sciences, as Mairet, Colletet, Desmarets, author of 'Araine;' Faret, Doujat, Charpentier, who wrote the 'Cyropédie;' Giry, Besons, and Baro, the continuer of 'Astrée,' — all academicians."

"Ah! now, indeed, here are men of real merit," said Louis; "there is nothing to be said against them. One cannot but gain from their society. Theirs are settled reputations; they 're men of weight. Come, let us make up; shake hands, child. I permit you to go there sometimes, but do not deceive me any more; you see I know all. Look at this."

So saying, the king took from a great iron chest set against the wall enormous packets of paper scribbled over with very fine writing. Upon one was written, *Baradas*, upon another, *D'Hautefort*, upon a third, *La Fayette*, and finally, *Cinq-Mars*. He stopped at the latter, and continued, —

"See how many times you have deceived me! These are the continual faults of which I have myself kept a register during the two years I have known you; I have written out our conversations day by day. Sit down."

Cinq-Mars obeyed with a sigh, and had the patience for two long hours to listen to a summary of what his master had had the patience to write in the course of two years. He yawned many times during the reading, as no doubt we should all do, were it needful to report this dialogue, which was found in perfect order, with his will, at the death of the king. We shall only say that he finished thus, —

"In fine, hear what you did on the 7th of December, three days ago. I was speaking to you of the flight of the hawk, and of the knowledge of hunting, in which you are deficient. I said to you on the authority of 'La Chasse Royale,' a work of King Charles IX., that after the hunter has accustomed his dog to follow a beast, he must consider him as of himself desirous of returning to the wood, and the dog must not be rebuked or struck in order to make him follow the track well; and that in order to teach a dog to set well, creatures that are not game must not be allowed to pass or run, nor must any scents be missed, without putting his nose to them.

"Hear what you replied to me (and in a tone of ill-humor — mind that!), — '*Ma foi!* Sire, give me rather regiments to conduct than birds and dogs. I am sure that people would laugh at you and me if they knew how we occupy ourselves.' And on the 8th — wait, yes, on the 8th — while we were singing vespers together in my chambers, you threw your book angrily into the fire, which was an impiety; and afterwards you told me that you had let it drop, — a sin, a mortal sin. See, I have written below, *lie*, underlined. People never deceive me, I assure you."

"But, Sire — "

"Wait a moment! wait a moment! In the evening you told me the cardinal had burned a man unjustly, and out of personal hatred."

"And I repeat it, and maintain it, and will prove it, Sire. It is the greatest crime of all of that man whom you hesitate to disgrace, and who renders you unhappy. I myself saw all, heard all, at Loudun. Urbain Grandier was assassinated rather than tried. Hold, Sire, since you have there all those memoranda in your own hand, merely reperuse the proofs which I then gave you of it."

Louis, seeking the page indicated, and going back to the journey from Perpignan to Paris, read the whole narrative with attention, exclaiming, —

"What horrors! How is it that I have forgotten all this? This man fascinates me; that's certain. You are my true friend, Cinq-Mars. What horrors! My reign will be stained by them. What! he prevented the letters of all the nobility and notables of the district from

reaching me! Burn, burn alive! without proofs! for revenge! A man, a people have invoked my name in vain; a family curses me! Oh, how unhappy are kings!"

And the prince, as he concluded, threw aside his papers and wept.

"Ah, Sire, those are blessed tears that you weep!" exclaimed Cinq-Mars, with sincere admiration. "Would that all France were here with me! She would be astonished at this spectacle, and would scarcely believe it."

"Astonished! France, then, does not know me?"

"No, sir," said D'Effiat, frankly; "no one knows you. And I myself, with the rest of the world, at times accuse you of coldness and indifference."

"Of coldness, when I am dying with sorrow! Of coldness, when I have immolated myself to their interests! Ungrateful nation! I have sacrificed all to it, even pride, even the happiness of guiding it myself, because I feared on its account for my fluctuating life. I have given my sceptre to be borne by a man I hate, because I believed his hand to be stronger than my own. I have endured the ill he has done to myself, thinking that he did good to my people. I have hidden my own tears to dry theirs; and I see that my sacrifice has been even greater than I thought it, for they have not perceived it. They have believed me incapable because I was kind, and without power because I mistrusted my own. But no matter! God sees and knows me!"

"Ah, Sire, show yourself to France such as you are; reassume your usurped power. France will do for your

love what she would never do from fear. Return to life, and reascend the throne."

"No, no; my life is well-nigh finished, my dear friend. I am no longer capable of the labor of supreme command."

"Ah, Sire, this persuasion alone destroys your vigor. It is time that men should cease to confound power with crime, and to call this union genius. Let your voice be heard proclaiming to the world that the reign of virtue is about to begin with your own; and henceforth those enemies whom vice has so much difficulty in suppressing will fall before a word uttered from your heart. No one has as yet calculated all that the good faith of a king of France may do for his people,—that people who are drawn so instantaneously towards all that is good and beautiful, by their imagination and warmth of soul, and who are always ready with every kind of devotion. The king your father led us by a smile. What would not one of your tears do?"

During this address the king, very much surprised, frequently reddened, hemmed, and gave signs of great embarrassment, as always happened when any attempt was made to bring him to a decision. He also felt the approach of a conversation of too high an order, which the timidity of his soul forbade him to venture upon; and repeatedly putting his hand to his chest, knitting his brows as if suffering violent pain, he endeavored to relieve himself by the apparent attack of illness from the embarrassment of answering. But either from passion, or from a resolution to strike the crowning blow, Cinq-Mars went on calmly and with a solemnity that

awed Louis, who, forced into his last intrenchments, at length said, —

"But, Cinq-Mars, how can I rid myself of a minister who for eighteen years past has surrounded me with his creatures?"

"He is not so very powerful," replied the grand écuyer; "and his friends will be his most sure enemies if you but make a sign of your head. The ancient league of the *princes of peace* still exists, Sire, and it is only the respect due to the choice of your Majesty that prevents it from manifesting itself."

"Ah, *mon Dieu!* thou mayst tell them not to stop on my account. I would not restrain them; they surely do not accuse me of being a Cardinalist. If my brother will give me the means of replacing Richelieu, I will adopt them with all my heart."

"I believe, Sire, that he will to-day speak to you of M. le Duc de Bouillon. All the Royalists demand him."

"I don't dislike him," said the king, arranging his pillows; "I don't dislike him at all, although he is somewhat factious. We are relatives. Knowest thou, *cher ami*," — and he placed on this favorite expression more emphasis than usual, — "knowest thou that he is descended in direct line from Saint Louis, by Charlotte de Bourbon, daughter of the Duc de Montpensier? Knowest thou that seven princes of the blood royal have been united to his house; and eight daughters of his family, one of whom was a queen, have been married to princes of the blood royal? Oh, I don't at all dislike him! I have never said so, never!"

"Well, Sire," said Cinq-Mars, with confidence, "Monsieur and he will explain to you during the hunt how all is prepared, who are the men that may be put in the place of his creatures, who the field-marshals and the colonels who may be depended upon against Fabert and the Cardinalists of Perpignan. You will see that the minister has very few for him.

"The queen, Monsieur, the nobility, and the parliaments are on our side; and the thing is done from the moment that your Majesty is not opposed to it. It has been proposed to get rid of the cardinal as the Maréchal d'Ancre was got rid of, who deserved it less than he."

"As Concini?" said the king. "Oh, no, it must not be. I positively cannot consent to it. He is a priest and a cardinal. We shall be excommunicated. But if there be any other means, I am very willing. Thou mayst speak of it to thy friends; and I on my side will think of the matter."

The word once spoken, the king gave himself up to his resentment, as if he had satisfied it, as if the blow were already struck. Cinq-Mars was vexed to see this, for he feared that his anger thus vented might not be of long duration. However, he put faith in his last words, especially when after numberless complaints Louis added, —

"And would you believe that though now for two years I have mourned my mother, ever since that day when he so cruelly mocked me before my whole court by asking for her recall when he knew she was dead, — ever since that day I have been trying in vain to get

them to bury her in France with my fathers? He has exiled even her ashes."

At this moment Cinq-Mars thought he heard a sound on the staircase; the king reddened.

"Go," he said; "go! Make haste and prepare for the hunt! Thou wilt ride next to my carriage. Go quickly! I desire it; go!"

And he himself pushed Cinq-Mars towards the entrance by which he had come.

The favorite went out; but his master's anxiety had not escaped him.

He slowly descended, and tried to divine the cause of it in his mind, when he thought he heard the sound of feet ascending the other staircase. He stopped; they stopped. He re-ascended; they seemed to him to descend. He knew that nothing could be seen between the interstices of the architecture; and he quitted the place, impatient and very uneasy, and determined to remain at the door of the entrance to see who should come out. But he had scarcely raised the tapestry which veiled the entrance to the guard-room than he was surrounded by a crowd of courtiers who had been awaiting him, and was fain to proceed to the work of issuing the orders connected with his post, or to receive respects, communications, solicitations, presentations, recommendations, embraces,—to observe that infinitude of relations which surround a favorite, and which require constant and sustained attention, for any absence of mind might cause great misfortunes. He thus almost forgot the trifling circumstance which had made him uneasy, and which he thought might after all have only been a freak of the

imagination. Giving himself up to the sweets of a kind of continual apotheosis, he mounted his horse in the great courtyard, attended by noble pages, and surrounded by brilliant gentlemen.

Monsieur soon arrived, followed by his people; and in an hour the king appeared, pale, languishing, and supported by four men. Cinq-Mars, dismounting, assisted him into a kind of small and very low carriage, called a *brouette*, and the horses of which, very docile and quiet ones, the king himself drove. The prickers on foot at the doors held the dogs in leash; and at the sound of the horn scores of young nobles mounted, and all set out to the place of meeting.

It was a farm called L'Ormage that the king had fixed upon; and all the court, accustomed to his ways, diffused themselves through the roads of the park, while the king slowly followed an isolated path, having at his side the grand écuyer and four persons whom he had signed to approach him.

The aspect of this pleasure party was sinister. The approach of winter had stripped well-nigh all the leaves from the great oaks in the park, whose dark branches now stood up against a gray sky, like branches of funereal candelabra. A light fog seemed to indicate rain; through the melancholy boughs of the thinned wood the heavy carriages of the court were seen slowly passing on, filled with women uniformly dressed in black, and obliged to await the result of a chase which they did not witness. The distant hounds gave tongue, and the horn was sometimes faintly heard like a sigh. A cold, cutting wind obliged every man to cover;

and some of the women, putting over their faces a veil or mask of black velvet to keep themselves from the air which the curtains of their carriages did not intercept (for there were no glasses at that time), seemed to wear what is called a domino. All was languishing and sad. The only relief was that ever and anon groups of young men in the excitement of the chase flew past the avenue like the wind, cheering on the dogs or sounding their horns; then all again became silent, as after the discharge of fire-works the sky appears darker than before.

In a path, parallel with that followed by the king, were several courtiers enveloped in their cloaks. Appearing little intent upon the stag, they rode even with the king's *brouette*, and never lost sight of him. They conversed in low tones.

"Excellent! Fontrailles, excellent! victory! The king takes his arm every moment. See how he smiles upon him! See! M. le Grand dismounts and gets into the *brouette* by his side. Come, come, the old fox is done at last!"

"Ah, that's nothing! Did not you see how the king shook hands with Monsieur? He's made a sign to you, Montrésor. Look, Gondi!"

"Look, indeed! That's very easy to say; but I don't see with my own eyes. I have only those of faith, and yours. Well, what are they doing now? I wish to Heaven I were not so near-sighted! Tell me, what are they doing?"

Montrésor answered, "The king bends his ear towards the Duc de Bouillon, who is speaking to him; he speaks

again! he gesticulates! he does not cease! Oh, he'll be minister!"

"He will be minister!" said Fontrailles.

"He will be minister!" echoed the Comte du Lude.

"Oh, no doubt of it!" said Montrésor.

"I hope he'll give me a regiment, and I'll marry my cousin," cried Olivier d'Entraigues, with boyish vivacity.

The Abbé de Gondi sneered, and looking up at the sky, began to sing to a hunting tune, —

> "Les étourneaux ont le vent bon,
> Ton ton, ton ton, ton taine, ton ton –

"I think, gentlemen, you are more short-sighted than I, or else miracles will come to pass in the year of grace 1642; for M. de Bouillon is no nearer being prime minister, though the king do embrace him, than I. He has good qualities, but he will not do; his qualities are not various enough. However, I have much respect for his great and singularly foolish town of Sedan, which is a fine shelter in case of need."

Montrésor and the rest were too attentive to every gesture of the prince to answer him; and they continued, —

"See, M. le Grand takes the reins, and is driving."

The abbé replied with the same air, —

> "Si vous conduisez ma brouette,
> Ne versez pas, beau postillon,
> Ton ton, ton ton, ton taine, ton ton."

"Ah, Abbé, your songs will drive me mad!" said Fontrailles. "You've got airs ready for every event in life."

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"I will also find you events which shall go to all the airs," answered Gondi.

"Faith, the air of these pleases me!" said Fontrailles, in an under voice. "I shall not be obliged by Monsieur to carry his confounded treaty to Madrid, and I am not sorry for it; it is a somewhat touchy commission. The Pyrenees are not so easily passed as may be supposed; the cardinal is on the road."

"Ah, ah!" cried Montrésor.

"Ah, ah!" said Olivier.

"Well, what is't with you? ah, ah!" asked Gondi. "What have you discovered so fine?"

"Why, the king has again shaken hands with Monsieur. Thank Heaven, gentlemen, we're rid of the cardinal! The old boar is hunted down. Who will stick the knife into him? He must be thrown into the sea."

"That's too good for him," said Olivier; "he must be tried."

"Certainly," said the abbé; "and we sha'n't want charges against an insolent fellow who has dared to discharge a page, shall we?" Then, curbing his horse, and letting Olivier and Montrésor pass on, he leaned towards M. du Lude, who was talking to two other serious personages, and said, —

"In truth, I am tempted to let my *valet-de-chambre* into the secret; never was a conspiracy treated so lightly. Great enterprises require mystery. This would be an admirable one if some trouble were taken with it. 'T is in itself a finer one than I have ever read of in history. There is stuff enough in it to upset three

kingdoms, if necessary, and the blockheads will spoil all. It is really a pity. I should be very sorry. I've a taste for affairs of this kind; and in this one in particular I feel a special interest. There is grandeur about it, as cannot be denied. Do you not think so, D'Aubijoux, Montmort?"

While he was speaking, several large and heavy carriages, with six and four horses, followed the same path at two hundred paces behind these gentlemen; the curtains were open on the left side through which to see the king. In the first was the queen; she was alone at the back, clothed in black and veiled. On the front was the Maréchale d'Effiat; and at the feet of the queen was the Princesse Marie. Seated on one side on a stool, her robe and her feet hung out of the carriage, and were supported by a gilt step,—for, as we have already observed, there were then no doors to the coaches. She also tried to see through the trees the movements of the king, and often leaned back, annoyed by the passing of the prince palatine and his suite.

This northern prince was sent by the King of Poland, apparently on a political negotiation, but in reality, to induce the Duchesse de Mantua to espouse the old King Uladislas VI.; and he displayed at the court of France all the luxury of his own, then called at Paris "barbarian and Scythian," and so far justified these names by strange eastern costumes. The palatine of Posnania was very handsome, and wore, in common with the people of his suite, a long thick beard. His head, shaved like that of a Turk, was covered with a furred cap. He had a short vest, enriched with diamonds and rubies; his horse

was painted red, and amply plumed. He was attended by a company of Polish guards in red and yellow uniforms, wearing large cloaks with long sleeves, which hung negligently from the shoulder. The Polish lords who escorted him were dressed in gold and silver brocade; and behind their shaved heads floated a single lock of hair, which gave them an Asiatic and Tartar aspect, as unknown at the court of Louis XIII. as that of the Moscovites. The women thought all this rather savage and alarming.

Marie de Gonzaga was importuned with the profound salutations and Oriental elegancies of this foreigner and his suite. Whenever he passed before her, he thought himself called upon to address a compliment to her in broken French, awkwardly made up of a few words about hope and royalty. She found no other means to rid herself of him than by repeatedly putting her handkerchief to her nose, and saying aloud to the queen, —

"In truth, Madame, these gentlemen have an odor about them that makes one quite ill."

"It will be desirable to strengthen your nerves and accustom yourself to it," answered Anne of Austria, somewhat dryly.

Then, fearing she had hurt her feelings, she continued gayly, —

"You will become used to them, as we have done; and you know that in respect to odors I am rather fastidious. M. Mazarin told me, the other day, that my punishment in purgatory will consist in breathing ill scents, and sleeping in Russian cloth."

Yet the queen was very grave, and soon subsided into silence. Burying herself in her carriage, enveloped in her mantle, and apparently taking no interest in what was passing around her, she yielded to the motion of the carriage. Marie, still occupied with the king, talked in a low voice with the Maréchale d'Effiat; each sought to give the other hopes which neither felt, and sought to deceive each other out of love.

"Madame, I congratulate you; M. le Grand is seated with the king. Never has he been so highly distinguished," said Marie.

Then she was silent for a long time, and the carriage rolled mournfully over the dead, dry leaves.

"Yes, I see it with joy; the king is so good!" answered the maréchale.

And she sighed deeply.

A long and sad silence again followed; each looked at the other and mutually found their eyes full of tears. They dared not speak again; and Marie, drooping her head, saw nothing but the brown, damp earth scattered by the wheels. A melancholy revery occupied her mind; and although she had before her the spectacle of the first court of Europe at the feet of him she loved, everything inspired her with fear, and dark presentiments involuntarily agitated her.

Suddenly a horse passed by her like the wind; she raised her eyes, and had just time to see the features of Cinq-Mars. He did not look at her; he was pale as a corpse, and his eyes were hidden under his knitted brows and the shadow of his lowered hat. She followed him with trembling eyes; she saw him stop in the midst

of the group of cavaliers who preceded the carriages, and who received him with their hats off. A moment after he went into the wood with one of them, looking at her from the distance, and following her with his eyes until the carriage had passed; then he seemed to give the man a roll of papers, and disappeared. The mist which was falling prevented her from seeing him any more. It was, indeed, one of those fogs so frequent on the banks of the Loire. The sun looked at first like a small blood-red moon, enveloped in a tattered shroud, and within half an hour was concealed under so thick a cloud that Marie could scarcely distinguish the foremost horses of the carriage, while the men who passed at the distance of a few paces looked like grizzly shadows. This icy vapor turned to a penetrating rain and at the same time a cloud of fetid odor. The queen made the beautiful princess sit beside her; and they turned towards Chambord quickly and in silence. They soon heard the horns recalling the scattered hounds; the huntsmen passed rapidly by the carriage, seeking their way through the fog, and calling to each other. Marie saw only now and then the head of a horse, or a dark body half issuing from the gloomy vapor of the woods, and tried in vain to distinguish any words. At length her heart beat; there was a call for M. de Cinq-Mars.

"The king asks for M. le Grand," was repeated about; "where can M. le Grand Écuyer be gone to?"

A voice, passing near, said, "He has just lost himself."

These simple words made her shudder, for her

afflicted spirit gave them the most sinister meaning. The terrible thought pursued her to the château and into her apartments, wherein she hastened to shut herself. She soon heard the noise of the entry of the king and of Monsieur, then, in the forest, some shots whose flash was unseen. She in vain looked at the narrow windows; they seemed covered on the outside with a white cloth that shut out the light.

Meanwhile, at the extremity of the forest, towards Montfrault, there had lost themselves two cavaliers, wearied with seeking the way to the château in the monotonous similarity of the trees and paths; they were about to stop near a pond, when eight or nine men, springing from the thickets, rushed upon them, and before they had time to draw, hung to their legs and arms and to the bridles of their horses in such a manner as to hold them fixed. At the same time a hoarse voice cried in the fog, —

"Are you Royalists or Cardinalists? Cry, 'Vive le Grand!' or you are dead men!"

"Scoundrels," answered the first cavalier, trying to open the holsters of his pistols, "I will have you hanged for abusing my name."

"Dios es le Senor!" cried the same voice.

All the men immediately released their hold, and ran into the wood; a burst of savage laughter was heard, and a man approached Cinq-Mars.

"*Amigo*, do you not recognize me? 'T is but a joke of Jacques, the Spanish captain."

Fontrailles approached, and said in a low voice to the grand écuyer, —

"Sir, this is an enterprising fellow; I would advise you to employ him. We must neglect no chance."

"Listen to me," said Jacques de Laubardemont, "and answer at once. I am not a phrase-maker, like my father. I bear in mind that you have done me some good offices; and lately again, you have been useful to me, as you always are, without knowing it, for I have somewhat repaired my fortune in your little insurrections. If you will, I can render you an important service; I command a few brave men."

"What service?" asked Cinq-Mars. "We will see."

"I commence by a piece of information. This morning while you descended the king's staircase on one side, Father Joseph ascended the other."

"Ha! this, then, is the secret of his sudden and inexplicable change! Can it be? A king of France! and to allow us to confide all our secrets to him."

"Well! is that all? Do you say nothing? You know I have an old account to settle with the Capuchin."

"What 's that to me?" and he hung down his head, absorbed in a profound revery.

"It matters a great deal to you, since you have only to speak the word, and I will rid you of him before thirty-six hours from this time, though he is now very near Paris. We might even add the cardinal, if you wish."

"Leave me; I will use no poniards," said Cinq-Mars.

"Ah! I understand you," replied Jacques. "You are right; you would prefer our despatching him with the sword. This is just. He is worth it; 't is a distinction

due to him. It were undoubtedly more suitable for great lords to take charge of the cardinal; and that he who despatches his Eminence should be in a fair way to be a maréchal. For myself, I am not proud; one must not be proud, whatever one's merit in one's profession. I must not touch the cardinal; he's a morsel for a king!"

"Nor any others," said the grand écuyer.

"Oh, let us have the Capuchin!" said Captain Jacques, urgently.

"You are wrong if you refuse this office," said Fontrailles; "such things occur every day. Vitry began with Concini; and he was made a maréchal. You see men extremely well at court, who have killed their enemies with their own hand in the streets of Paris, and you hesitate to rid yourself of a villain! Richelieu has his agents; you must have yours. I cannot understand your scruples."

"Do not torment him," said Jacques, abruptly; "I understand it. I thought as he does when I was a boy, before reason came. I would not have killed even a monk; but let me speak to him." Then turning towards Cinq-Mars, "Listen: when men conspire, they seek the death or at least the downfall of some one, eh?"

And he paused.

"Now in that case, we are out with God, and in with the Devil, eh?"

"*Secundo*, as they say at the Sorbonne; it's no worse when one is damned, to be so for much than for little, eh?"

"*Ergo*, it is indifferent whether a thousand or one be killed. I defy you to answer that."

"Nothing could be better argued, Doctor-dagger," said Fontrailles, half-laughing, "I see you will be a good travelling-companion. You shall go with me to Spain if you like."

"I know you are going to take the treaty there," answered Jacques; "and I will guide you through the Pyrenees by roads unknown to man. But I shall be horribly vexed to go away without having wrung the neck of that old he-goat, whom we leave behind, like a knight in the midst of a game of chess. Once more, sir," he continued with an air of pious earnestness, "if you have any religion in you, refuse no longer; recollect the words of our theological fathers, Hurtado de Mendoza and Sanchez, who have proved that a man may secretly kill his enemies, since by this means he avoids two sins, — that of exposing his life, and that of fighting a duel. It is in accordance with this grand consolatory principle that I have always acted."

"Go, go!" said Cinq-Mars, in a voice thick with rage; "I have other things to think of."

"Of what more important?" said Fontrailles; "this might be a great weight in the balance of our destinies."

"I am thinking how much the heart of a king weighs in it," said Cinq-Mars.

"You terrify me," replied the gentleman; "we cannot go so far as that!"

"Nor do I think what you suppose, sir," continued D'Effiat, in a severe tone. "I was merely reflecting how kings complain when a subject betrays them. Well,

war! war! civil war, foreign war, let your fires be kindled! since I hold the match, I will apply it to the mine. Perish the State! perish twenty kingdoms, if necessary! No ordinary calamities suffice when the king betrays the subject. Listen to me."

And he took Fontrailles a few steps aside.

"I only charged you to prepare our retreat and succors, in case of abandonment on the part of the king. Just now I foresaw this abandonment in his forced manifestation of friendship; and I decided upon your setting out when he finished his conversation by announcing his departure for Perpignan. I feared Narbonne; I now see that he is going there to deliver himself up a prisoner to the cardinal. Go at once. I add to the letters I have given you the treaty here; it is in fictitious names, but here is the counterpart, signed by Monsieur, by the Duc de Bouillon, and by me. The Count-Duke of Olivarès desires nothing further. There are blanks for the Duc d'Orléans, which you will fill up as you please. Go; in a month I shall expect you at Perpignan. I will have Sedan opened to the seventeen thousand Spaniards from Flanders."

Then advancing towards the adventurer, who awaited him, he said, —

"For you, brave fellow, since you desire to aid me, I charge you with escorting this gentleman to Madrid; you will be largely recompensed."

Jacques, twisting his mustache, replied, —

"Ah, you do not then scorn to employ me! you exhibit your judgment and taste. Do you know that the great Queen Christina of Sweden has asked for me, and

wished to have me with her as her confidential man? She was brought up to the sound of the cannon by the 'Lion of the North,' Gustavus Adolphus, her father. She loves the smell of powder and brave men; but I would not serve her, because she is a Huguenot, and I have fixed principles, from which I never swerve. *Par exemple*, I swear to you by Saint Jacques to guide Monsieur through the passes of the Pyrenees to Oleron as surely as through these woods, and to defend him against the Devil, if need be, as well as your papers, which we will bring you back without blot or tear. As for recompense, I want none. I always find it in the action itself. Besides, I do not receive money, for I am a gentleman. The Laubardemonts are a very ancient and very good family."

"Adieu, then, noble sir," said Cinq-Mars; "go!"

After having pressed the hand of Fontrailles, he sighed and disappeared in the wood, on his return to the château of Chambord.

CHAPTER XX.

THE READING.

Les circonstances dévoilent pour ainsi dire la royauté du génie, dernière ressource des peuples éteints. Les grands écrivains . . . ces rois qui n'en ont pas le nom, mais qui règnent véritablement par la force du caractère et de la grandeur des pensées, sont élus par les événements auxquels ils doivent commander. Sans ancêtres et sans postérité, seuls de leur race, leur mission remplie, ils disparaissent en laissant à l'avenir des ordres qu'il exécutera fidèlement.

P. DE LAMENNAIS.

SHORTLY after the events just narrated, at the corner of the Palais-Royal, at a small and pretty house, numerous carriages were seen to draw up, and a door, reached by three stone steps, frequently to open. The neighbors often came to their windows to complain of the noise made at so late an hour of the night, despite the fear of robbers; and the patrol often stopped in surprise, and only passed on when they saw at each carriage ten or twelve footmen, armed with staves and carrying torches. A young gentleman, followed by three lackeys, entered and asked for Mademoiselle de Lorme. He wore a long rapier, ornamented with pink ribbon. Enormous bows

of the same color on his high-heeled shoes almost entirely concealed his feet, which after the fashion of the day he turned very much out. He frequently twisted a small curling mustache, and before entering combed his small pointed beard. There was but one exclamation when he was announced.

"Here he is at last!" cried a young and rich voice. "He has made us wait long enough for him, the dear Desbarreaux. Come, take a seat! place yourself at this table and read."

The speaker was a woman of about four-and-twenty, tall and handsome, notwithstanding her somewhat woolly black hair and her dark olive complexion. There was something masculine in her manner, which she seemed to derive from her circle, composed entirely of men. She took their arm unceremoniously, as she spoke to them, with a freedom which she communicated to them. Her conversation was animated rather than joyous. It often excited laughter around her; but it was by dint of intellect that she created gayety (if we may so express it), for her countenance, impassioned as it was, seemed incapable of bending into a smile, and her large blue eyes, under her jet-black hair, gave her at first rather a strange appearance.

Desbarreaux kissed her hand with a gallant and chivalrous air. He then, talking to her all the time, walked round the large room, where were assembled nearly thirty persons, — some seated in the large arm-chairs, others standing in the vast chimney-place, others conversing in the embrasures of the windows under the heavy curtains. Some of them were obscure men, now

illustrious; others illustrious men, now obscure for us posterity. Thus, among the latter, he profoundly saluted MM. d'Aubijoux, de Brion, de Montmort, and other very brilliant gentlemen, who were there as judges; tenderly, and with an air of esteem, pressed the hands of MM. Monteruel, de Sirmond, de Malleville, Baro, Gombauld, and other learned men, almost all called great men in the annals of the academy of which they were the founders, — itself called sometimes the Académie des Beaux Esprits, sometimes the Académie Éminente. But M. Desbarreaux gave but a mere patronizing nod to young Corneille, who was talking in a corner with a foreigner, and with a young man whom he presented to the mistress of the house by the name of M. Poquelin, son of the *valet-de-chambre tapissier du roi.* The foreigner was Milton; the young man was Molière.

Before the reading expected from the young Sybarite, a great contest arose between him and other poets and prose writers of the time. They spoke to each other with great volubility and animation a language incomprehensible to any one who should suddenly have come among them without being initiated, eagerly pressing each other's hands with affectionate compliments and infinite allusions to their works.

"Ah, here you are, illustrious Baro!" cried the newcomer. "I have read your last sixain. Ah, what a sixain! how full of the gallant and the *tendre!*"

"What is that you say of the Tendre?" interrupted Marion de Lorme; "have you ever seen that country? You stopped at the village of Grand-Esprit, and at that of Jolis-Vers, but you have been no farther. If M. le

Gouverneur de Notre Dame de la Garde will please to show us his new chart, I will tell you where you are."

Scudéry arose with a vain-glorious and pedantic air; and unrolling upon the table a sort of geographical chart, tied with blue ribbons, he himself showed the lines of red ink which he had traced upon it.

"This is the finest piece of 'Clélie,'" he said. "This chart is generally found very gallant; but 't is merely a slight ebullition of playful wit, to please our little literary *cabale*. However, as there are strange people in the world, it is possible that all who see it may not have minds sufficiently well turned to understand it. This is the road which must be followed to go from Nouvelle-Amitié to Tendre; and observe, gentlemen, that as we say Cumæ-on-the-Ionian-Sea, Cumæ-on-the-Tyrrhean-Sea, we shall say Tendre-sur-Inclination, Tendre-sur-Estime, and Tendre-sur-Reconnaissance. We must begin by inhabiting the village of Grand-Cœur, Générosité, Exactitude, and Petits-Soins."

"Ah! how very pretty!" interposed Desbarreaux. "See the villages marked out; here is Petits-Soins, Billet-Galant, then Billet-Doux!"

"Oh! 't is ingenious in the highest degree!" cried Vaugelas, Colletet, and the rest.

"And observe," continued the author, inflated with this success, "that it is necessary to pass through Complaisance and Sensibilité; and that if we do not take this road, we run the risk of losing our way to Tiédeur, Oubli, and of falling into the lake of Indifférence."

"Delicious! delicious! gallant *au suprême!*" cried the auditors; "never was greater genius!"

"Well, Madame," resumed Scudéry, "I now declare it in your house: this work, printed under my name, is by my sister, — she who translated 'Sappho' so agreeably." And without being asked, he recited in a declamatory tone verses ending thus: —

"L'amour est un mal agréable [1]
Dont mon cœur ne saurait guérir;
Mais quand il serait guérissable,
Il est bien plus doux d'en mourir."

"How! had that Greek so much wit? I cannot believe it," exclaimed Marion de Lorme; "how superior Mademoiselle de Scudéry is to her! That idea is wholly hers; she must unquestionably put these charming verses into 'Clélie.' They will figure well in that Roman history."

"Admirable, perfect!" cried all the *savans;* "Horatius, Aruns, and the amiable Porsenna are such gallant lovers."

They were all bending over the "carte de Tendre," and their fingers crossed in following the windings of the amorous rivers. The young Poquelin ventured to raise a timid voice and his melancholy but acute glance, and said, —

"What purpose does this serve? Is it to give happiness or pleasure? Monsieur seems to me not singularly happy, and I do not feel very gay."

The only reply he got was a general look of contempt; he consoled himself by meditating, "Les Précieuses Ridicules."

Desbarreaux prepared to read a pious sonnet, which

[1] See Clélie, t. i.

he was penitent for having composed in an illness; he seemed to be ashamed of having thought for a moment upon God at the sight of his lightning, and blushed at the weakness. The mistress of the house stopped him.

"It is not yet time to read your beautiful verses; you would be interrupted. We expect M. le Grand Écuyer and other gentlemen; it would be actual murder to allow a great mind to speak during this noise and confusion. But here is a young Englishman who has just come from Italy, and is on his return to London. They tell me he has composed a poem — I don't know what; but he 'll repeat some verses of it. Many of you gentlemen of the eminent company know English; and for the rest he has had the passages he is going to read translated by an ex-secretary of the Duke of Buckingham, and here are copies in French on this table."

So saying, she took them and distributed them among her erudite visitors. The company seated themselves, and were silent. It took some time to persuade the young foreigner to speak or to quit the recess of the window, where he seemed to have come to a very good understanding with Corneille. He at last advanced to an armchair placed near the table; he seemed of feeble health, and fell into, rather than seated himself, in the chair. He rested his elbow on the table, and with his hand covered his large and beautiful eyes, which were half closed, and reddened with night-watches or tears. He repeated his fragments from memory. His doubting auditors looked at him haughtily, or at least patronizingly; others carelessly glanced over the translation of his verses.

His voice, at first suppressed, grew clearer by the very flow of his harmonious recital; the breath of poetic inspiration soon elevated him to himself; and his look, raised to heaven, became sublime as that of the young evangelist, conceived by Raffaello, for the light still shone on it. He narrated in his verses the first disobedience of man, and invoked the Holy Spirit, who prefers before all other temples a pure and simple heart, who knows all, and who was present at the birth of time.

This opening was received with a profound silence; and a slight murmur arose after the enunciation of the last idea. He heard not; he saw only through a cloud; he was in the world of his own creation. He continued.

He spoke of the infernal spirit, bound in avenging fire by adamantine chains, lying vanquished nine times the space that measures night and day to mortal men; of the darkness visible of the eternal prisons and the burning ocean where the fallen angels float. Then, his voice, now powerful, began the address of the fallen angel. "Art thou," he said, "he who in the happy realms of light, clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine myriads? From what height fallen? What though the field be lost, all is not lost! Unconquerable will and study of revenge, immortal hate and courage never to submit nor yield — what is else not to be overcome."

Here a lackey in a loud voice announced MM. de Montrésor and d'Entraigues. They saluted, exchanged a few words, deranged the chairs, and then settled down. The auditors availed themselves of the interruption to institute a dozen private conversations; scarcely any-

thing was heard but expressions of censure, and imputations of bad taste. Even some men of merit, dulled by a particular habit of thinking, cried out that they did not understand it; that it was above their comprehension (not thinking how truly they spoke); and from this feigned humility gained themselves a compliment, and for the poet an impertinent remark, — a double advantage. Some voices even pronounced the word "profanation."

The poet, interrupted, put his head between his hands and his elbows on the table, that he might not hear the noise either of praise or censure. Three men only approached him, an officer, Poquelin, and Corneille; the latter whispered to Milton, —

"I would advise you to change the picture; your hearers are not on a level with this."

The officer pressed the hand of the English poet and said to him, —

"I admire you with all my soul."

The astonished Englishman looked at him, and saw an intellectual, impassioned, and sickly countenance.

He bowed, and collected himself, in order to proceed. His voice took a gentle tone and a soft accent; he spoke of the chaste happiness of the two first of human beings. He described their majestic nakedness, the ingenuous command of their looks, their walk among lions and tigers, which gambolled at their feet; he spoke of the purity of their morning prayer, of their enchanting smile, the playful tenderness of their youth, and their enamoured conversation, so painful to the Prince of Darkness.

Gentle tears quite involuntarily made humid the eyes of the beautiful Marion de Lorme. Nature had taken possession of her heart, despite her head; poetry filled it with grave and religious thoughts, from which the intoxication of pleasure had ever diverted her. The idea of virtuous love appeared to her for the first time in all its beauty; and she seemed as if struck with a magic wand, and changed into a pale and beautiful statue.

Corneille, his young friend, and the officer, were full of a silent admiration which they dared not express, for raised voices drowned that of the surprised poet.

"I can't stand this!" cried Desbarreaux. "It's of an insipidity to make one sick."

"And what absence of grace, gallantry, and the *belle flamme!*" said Scudéry, coldly.

"Ah, how different from our immortal D'Urfé!" said Baro, the continuator.

"Where is the 'Ariane,' where the 'Astrea?'" cried, with a groan, Godeau, the annotator.

The whole assembly well-nigh voiced these obliging remarks, though uttered so as only to be heard by the poet as a murmur of uncertain import. He understood however that he produced no enthusiasm, and collected himself to touch another chord of his lyre.

At this moment the Counsellor de Thou was announced, who, modestly saluting the company, glided silently behind the author near Corneille, Poquelin, and the young officer. Milton resumed his strain.

He recounted the arrival of a celestial guest in the garden of Eden, like a second Aurora in midday, shaking the plumes of his divine wings, that filled the air

with heavenly fragrance, who recounted to man the history of heaven, the revolt of Lucifer, clothed in an armor of diamonds, raised on a car brilliant as the sun, guarded by glittering cherubim, and marching against the Eternal. But Emmanuel appears on the living chariot of the Lord; and his two thousand thunderbolts hurled down to hell, with awful noise, the accursed army confounded.

At this the company arose; and all was interrupted, for religious scruples became leagued with false taste. Nothing was heard but exclamations which obliged the mistress of the house to rise also, and endeavor to conceal them from the author. This was not difficult, for he was entirely absorbed in the elevation of his thoughts. His genius at this moment had nothing in common with the earth; and when he once more opened his eyes on those who surrounded him, he saw near him four admirers, whose voices were better heard than those of the assembly.

Corneille said to him, —

"Listen. If you aim at present glory, do not expect it from so fine a work. Pure poetry is appreciated by but few souls. For the common run of men, it must be closely allied with the almost physical interest of the drama. I had been tempted to make a poem of 'Polyeuctes;' but I shall cut down this subject, abridge it of the heavens, and it shall be only a tragedy."

"What matters to me the glory of the moment?" answered Milton. "I think not of success. I sing because I feel myself a poet. I go whither inspiration leads me. Its path is ever the right one. If these

verses were not to be read till a century after my death, I should write them just the same."

"I admire them before they are written," said the young officer. "I see in them the God whose innate image I have found in my heart."

"Who is it speaks thus kindly to me?" asked the poet.

"I am René Descartes," replied the soldier, gently.

"How, sir!" cried De Thou. "Are you so happy as to be related to the author of the 'Princeps'?"

"I am the author of that work," replied René.

"You, sir! — but — still — pardon me — but — are you not a military man?" stammered out the counsellor, in amazement.

"Well, what has the habit of the body to do with the thought? Yes, I wear the sword. I was at the siege of Rochelle. I love the profession of arms because it keeps the soul in a region of noble ideas by the continual feeling of the sacrifice of life; yet it does not occupy the whole man. He cannot always apply his thoughts to it. Peace lulls them. Moreover, one has also to fear seeing them suddenly interrupted by an obscure blow or an absurd and untimely accident. And if a man be killed in the execution of his plan, posterity preserves an idea of the plan which he himself had not, and which may be wholly preposterous; and this is the evil side of the profession for a man of letters."

De Thou smiled with pleasure at the simple language of this superior man, — this man whom he so admired, and in his admiration loved. He pressed the hand of the young sage of Touraine, and drew him into an ad-

joining cabinet with Corneille, Milton, and Molière, and with them enjoyed one of those conversations which make us regard as lost the time which precedes them and the time which is to follow them.

For two hours they had enchanted one another with their discourse, when the sound of music, of guitars and flutes playing minuets, sarabands, allemandes, and the Spanish dances which the young queen had brought into fashion, the continual passing of groups of young ladies and their joyous laughter, all announced that the ball had commenced. A very young and beautiful person, holding a large fan as it were a sceptre, and surrounded by ten young men, entered their retired chamber with her brilliant court, which she ruled like a queen, and entirely put to the rout the studious conversers.

"Adieu, gentlemen!" said De Thou. "I make way for Mademoiselle de Lenclos and her musketeers."

"Really, gentlemen," said the youthful Ninon, "we seem to frighten you. Have I disturbed you? You have all the air of conspirators."

"We are perhaps more so than these gentlemen, although we dance," said Olivier d'Entraigues, who led her.

"Ah! your conspiracy is against me, M. le Page!" said Ninon, looking the while at another light-horseman, and abandoning her remaining arm to a third, the other gallants seeking to place themselves in the way of her flying *œillades*, for she distributed her glances brilliant as the rays of the sun dancing over the moving waters.

De Thou stole away without any one thinking of stopping him, and was descending the great staircase, when he met the little Abbé de Gondi, red, hot, and out of

breath, who stopped him with an animated and joyous air.

"How now! whither go you? Let the foreigners and *savans* go. You are one of us. I am somewhat late; but our beautiful Aspasia will pardon me. Why are you going? Is it all over?"

"Why, it seems so. When the dancing begins, the reading is done."

"The reading, yes; but the oaths?" said the abbé, in a low voice.

"What oaths?" asked De Thou.

"Is not M. le Grand come?"

"I expected to see him; but I suppose he has not come, or else he has gone."

"No, no! come with me," said the hare-brained abbé. "You are one of us. *Parbleu!* it is impossible to do without you; come!"

De Thou, unwilling to refuse, and thus appear to disown his friends, even for parties of pleasure which annoyed him, followed De Gondi, who passed through two cabinets, and descended a small private staircase. At each step he took, he heard more distinctly the voices of an assemblage of men. Gondi opened the door. An unexpected spectacle met his view.

The chamber he was entering, lighted by a mysterious glimmer, seemed the asylum of the most voluptuous rendezvous. On one side was a gilt bed, with a canopy of tapestry ornamented with feathers, and covered with lace and ornaments. The furniture, shining with gold, was of grayish silk, richly embroidered. Velvet cushions were at the foot of each armchair, upon a thick

carpet. Small mirrors, connected with one another by ornaments of silver, seemed an entire glass, itself a perfection then unknown, and everywhere multiplied their glittering faces. No sound from without could penetrate this throne of delight; but the persons assembled there seemed far remote from the thoughts which it was calculated to give rise to. A number of men, whom he recognized as courtiers, or soldiers of rank, crowded the entrance of this chamber and an adjoining apartment of larger dimensions. All were intent upon that which was passing in the centre of the first room. Here, ten young men, standing, and holding in their hands their drawn swords, the points of which were lowered towards the ground, were ranged round a table. Their faces, turned to Cinq-Mars, announced that they had just taken an oath to him. The grand écuyer stood by himself before the fireplace, his arms folded with an air of all-absorbing reflection. Standing near him, Marion de Lorme, grave and collected, seemed to have presented these gentlemen to him.

When Cinq-Mars perceived his friend, he rushed towards the door, casting a terrible glance at Gondi, and seizing De Thou by both arms, stopped him on the last step.

"What do you here?" he said in a stifled voice. "Who brought you here? What would you with me? You are lost if you enter."

"What do you yourself here? What do I see in this house?"

"The consequences of that you wot of. Go; this air is poisoned for all who are here."

"It is too late; they have seen me. What would they say if I were to withdraw? I should discourage them; you would be lost."

This dialogue had passed in low and hurried tones; at the last word, De Thou, pushing aside his friend, entered, and with a firm step crossed the apartment to the fireplace.

Cinq-Mars, trembling with rage, resumed his place, hung his head, collected himself, and soon raising a more calm countenance, continued a discourse which the entrance of his friend had interrupted, —

"Be then with us, gentlemen; there is no longer any need for so much mystery. Remember that when a strong mind embraces an idea, it must follow it to all its consequences. Your courage will have a wider field than that of a court intrigue. Thank me; instead of a conspiracy, I give you a war. M. de Bouillon has departed to place himself at the head of his army of Italy; in two days, and before the king, I quit Paris for Perpignan. Come all of you thither; the Royalists of the army await us."

Here he threw around him calm and confident looks; he saw gleams of joy and enthusiasm in the eyes of all who surrounded him. Before allowing his own heart to be possessed by the contagious emotion which precedes great enterprises, he desired still more firmly to assure himself of them, and said with a grave air, —

"Yes, war, gentlemen; think of it, open war. Rochelle and Navarre are arousing their Protestants; the army of Italy will enter on one side; the king's brother will join us on the other. The man we combat will be sur-

rounded, vanquished, crushed. The parliaments will march in our rear, bearing their petitions to the king, a weapon as powerful as our swords; and after the victory we will throw ourselves at the feet of Louis XIII., our master, that he may pardon us for having delivered him from a cruel and ambitious man, and hastened his own resolution."

Here, again glancing around him, he saw increasing confidence in the looks and attitudes of his accomplices.

"How!" he continued, crossing his arms, and yet restraining with an effort his own emotion; "you do not recoil before this resolution, which would appear a revolt to any other men! Do you not think that I have abused the powers you have vested in me? I have carried matters very far; but there are times when kings would be served, as it were in spite of themselves. All is arranged, as you know. Sedan will open its gates to us; and we are sure of Spain. Twelve thousand veteran troops will enter Paris with us. No place, however, will be given up to the foreigner; they will all have a French garrison, and be taken in the name of the king."

"Long live the king! long live the Union! the new Union, the Holy League!" cried the assembly.

"It has come, then!" cried Cinq-Mars, with enthusiasm; "it has come,—the most glorious day of my life. Oh, youth, youth, from century to century called frivolous and improvident! of what will men now accuse thee, when they behold conceived, ripened, and ready for execution, under a chief of twenty-two, the

most vast, the most just, the most beneficial of enterprises? My friends, what is a great life but a thought of youth executed by mature age? Youth looks fixedly into the future with its eagle glance, traces there a broad plan, lays the foundation stone; and all that our entire existence afterwards can do is to approximate to that first design. Oh, when can great projects arise, if not when the heart beats vigorously in the breast? The mind is not sufficient; it is but an instrument."

A fresh outburst of joy had followed these words, when an old man with a white beard stood forward from the throng.

"Bah!" said Gondi, in a low voice, "here's the old Chevalier de Guise going to dote and damp us."

And truly enough, the old man, pressing the hand of Cinq-Mars, said slowly and with difficulty, having placed himself near him,—

"Yes, my son, and you, my children, I see with joy that my old friend Bassompierre is about to be delivered by you, and that you are about to avenge the Comte de Soissons and the young Montmorency. But it is expedient for youth, all ardent as it is, to listen to those who have seen much. I have witnessed the League, my children, and I tell you that you cannot now, as then, take the title of the Holy League, the Holy Union, the Protectors of Saint Peter, or Pillars of the Church, because I see that you reckon on the support of the Huguenots; nor can you put upon your great seal of green wax an empty throne, since it is occupied by a king."

"You may say by two," interrupted Gondi, laughing.

"It is, however, of great importance," continued old

Guise, amid the tumultuous young men, "to take a name to which the people may attach themselves; that of War for the Public Welfare has been made use of; Princes of Peace only lately. It is necessary to find one."

"Well, the War of the King," said Cinq-Mars.

"Ay, the War of the King!" cried Gondi and all the young men.

"Moreover," continued the old seigneur, "it is essential to gain the approval of the theological faculty of the Sorbonne, which heretofore sanctioned even the *haut-gourdiers* and the *sorgueurs*,[1] and to put in force its second proposition, — that it is permitted to the people to disobey the magistrates, and to hang them."

"Eh, Chevalier!" exclaimed Gondi; "this is not the question. Let M. le Grand speak; we are thinking no more of the Sorbonne at present than of your Saint Jacques Clement."

There was a laugh, and Cinq-Mars went on, —

"I wished, gentlemen, to conceal nothing from you as to the projects of Monsieur, those of the Duc de Bouillon, or my own, for it is just that a man who stakes his life should know at what game; but I have placed before you the least fortunate chances, and I have not detailed our strength, for there is not one of you but knows the secret of it. Is it to you, MM. de Montrésor and de Saint-Thibal, I need tell the treasures that Monsieur places at our disposal? Is it to you, M. d'Aignou, M. de Mouy, that I need tell how many gentlemen are eager to join your companies of men-at-arms and light-horse,

[1] Names of the *ligueurs*.

to fight the Cardinalists; how many in Touraine and in Auvergne, where lay the lands of the House of D'Effiat, and whence will march two thousand seigneurs, with their vassals? Baron de Beauvau, shall I repeat to you the zeal and valor of the cuirassiers whom you brought to the unhappy Comte de Soissons, whose cause was ours, and whom you saw assassinated in the midst of his triumph by him whom with you he had defeated? Shall I tell these gentlemen of the joy of the Count-Duke of Olivarès at the news of our intentions, and the letters of the cardinal-infanta to the Duc de Bouillon? Shall I speak of Paris to the Abbé de Gondi, to D'Entraigues, and to you, gentlemen, who are daily witnesses of her misery, of her indignation, and her desire to break forth? While all foreign nations demand peace, which the Cardinal de Richelieu still destroys by his want of faith (as he has done in violating the treaty of Ratisbon), all orders of the State groan under his violence, and dread that colossal ambition which aspires to no less than the temporal and even spiritual throne of France."

A murmur of approbation interrupted Cinq-Mars. There was then silence for a moment; and they heard the sound of wind instruments, and the measured tread of the dancers.

This noise caused a momentary diversion and a smile in the younger portion of the assembly.

Cinq-Mars profited by this; and raising his eyes, "Pleasures of youth," he cried, — "love, music, joyous dances, — why do you not alone occupy our leisure hours? Why are not you our sole ambition? What resentment

may we not justly feel that we have to make our cries of indignation heard above our bursts of joy, our formidable secrets in the asylum of love, and our oaths of war and death amid the intoxication of fêtes and of life!

"Curses on him who saddens the youth of a people! When wrinkles furrow the brow of the young men, we may confidently say that the finger of a tyrant has hollowed them out. The other troubles of youth give it despair and not consternation. Watch those sad and mournful students pass day after day with pale foreheads, slow steps, and half-suppressed voices. One would think they fear to live or to advance a step towards the future. What is there then in France? A man too many.

"Yes," he continued; "for two years I have watched the insidious and profound progress of his ambition. His strange practices, his secret commissions, his judicial assassinations are known to you. Princes, peers, maréchals, — all have been crushed by him. There is not a family in France but can show some sad trace of his passage. If he regards us all as enemies to his authority, it is because he would have in France none but his own house, which twenty years ago held only one of the smallest fiefs of Poitou.

"The humiliated parliament has no longer any voice. The presidents of Nismes, Novion, and Bellièvre have revealed to you their courageous but fruitless resistance to the condemnation to death of the Duc de la Vallette.

"The presidents and councils of sovereign courts have been imprisoned, banished, suspended, — a thing before

unheard of, — because they have raised their voices for the king or for the public.

"The highest offices of justice, who fill them? Infamous and corrupt men, who suck the blood and gold of the country. Paris and the maritime towns taxed; the rural districts ruined and laid waste by the soldiers and other agents of the cardinal; the peasants reduced to feed on animals killed by the plague or famine, or saving themselves by self-banishment, — such is the work of this new justice. His worthy agents have even coined money with the effigy of the cardinal-duc. Here are some of his royal pieces."

The grand écuyer threw upon the table a score of gold doubloons whereon Richelieu was represented. A fresh murmur of hatred towards the cardinal arose in the apartment.

"And think you the clergy are less trampled on and less discontented? No. Bishops have been tried against the laws of the State and in contempt of the respect due to their sacred persons. We have seen, in consequence, Algerine corsairs commanded by an archbishop. Men of the lowest condition have been elevated to the cardinalate. The minister himself, devouring the most sacred things, has had himself elected general of the orders of Citeaux, Cluny, and Premontré, throwing into prison the monks who refused him their votes. Jesuits, Carmelites, Cordeliers, Augustins, Dominicans, have been forced to elect general vicars in France, in order no longer to communicate at Rome with their true superiors, because he would be patriarch in France, and head of the Gallican Church."

"He's a schismatic! a monster!" cried several voices.

"His progress, then, is apparent, gentlemen. He is ready to seize both temporal and spiritual power. He has little by little fortified himself against the king in the strongest towns of France, — seized the mouths of the principal rivers, the best ports of the ocean, the salt-pits, and all the securities of the kingdom. It is the king, then, whom we must deliver from this oppression. 'Le roi et la paix!' shall be our cry. The rest must be left to Providence."

Cinq-Mars greatly astonished the assembly, and De Thou himself, by this address. No one had ever before heard him speak so long together, not even in fireside conversation; and he had never by a single word shown the least aptitude for understanding public affairs. He had, on the contrary, affected the greatest indifference on the subject, even in the eyes of those whom he was moulding to his projects, merely manifesting a virtuous indignation at the violence of the minister, but affecting not to put forward any of his own ideas, in order not to suggest personal ambition as the aim of his labors. The confidence given to him rested on his favor with the king and his personal bravery. The surprise of all present was therefore such as to cause a momentary silence. It was soon broken by all the transports of Frenchmen, young or old, when fighting of whatever kind is held out to them.

Among those who came forward to press the hand of the young party leader, the Abbé de Gondi jumped about like a kid.

"I have already enrolled my regiment!" he cried. "I

have some superb fellows!" Then, addressing Marion de Lorme, "*Parbleu!* Mademoiselle, I will wear your colors, — your gray ribbon, and your order of the Allumette. The device is charming, —

'Nous ne brûlons que pour brûler les autres.'

And I wish you could see all the fine things we shall do if we are fortunate enough to come to blows."

The fair Marion, who did not like him, began to talk over his head to M. de Thou, — a mortification which always exasperated the little abbé, who accordingly abruptly left her, walking as tall as he could, and scornfully twisting his mustache.

All at once a sudden silence took possession of the assembly. A rolled paper had struck the ceiling and fallen at the feet of Cinq-Mars. He picked it up and unrolled it, after having looked eagerly around him. He sought in vain to divine whence it came; all those who advanced had only astonishment and intense curiosity depicted in their faces.

"Here is my name wrongly written," he said coldly.

"A CINQ-MARCS,

CENTURIE DE NOSTRADAMUS.[1]

Quand *bonnet rouge* passera par la fenêtre,
A *quarante onces* on coupera tête,
Et *tout* finira.

"There is a traitor among us, gentlemen," he said, throwing away the paper. "But no matter. We are not men to be frightened by his sanguinary jests."

[1] This punning prediction was made public three months before the conspiracy.

"We must find the traitor out, and throw him through the window," said the young men.

Still, a disagreeable sensation had come over the assembly. They now only spoke in whispers, and each regarded his neighbor with distrust. Some withdrew; the meeting grew thinner. Marion de Lorme repeated to every one that she would dismiss her servants, who alone could be suspected. Despite her efforts a coldness reigned throughout the apartment. The first sentences of Cinq-Mars's address, too, had left some uncertainty as to the intentions of the king; and this untimely candor had somewhat shaken a few of the less determined conspirators.

Gondi pointed this out to Cinq-Mars.

"Hark ye!" he said in a low voice. "Believe me, I have carefully studied conspiracies and assemblages; there are certain purely mechanical means which it is necessary to adopt. Follow my advice here; I know a good deal of this sort of thing. They want something more. Give them a little contradiction; that always succeeds in France. You will quite make them alive again. Seem not to want to retain them against their will, and they will remain."

The grand écuyer approved of the suggestion, and advancing towards those whom he knew to be most deeply compromised, said,—

"For the rest, gentlemen, I do not wish to force any one to follow me. Plenty of brave men await us at Perpignan, and all France is with us. If any one desires to secure himself a retreat, let him speak. We will give him the means of placing himself in safety at once."

Not one would hear of this proposition; and the movement it occasioned produced a renewal of the oaths of hatred against the minister.

Cinq-Mars, however, proceeded to put the question individually to some of the persons present, in the election of whom he showed much judgment; for he ended with Montrésor, who cried that he would pass his sword through his body if he had for a moment entertained such an idea, and with Gondi, who, rising fiercely on his heels, exclaimed,—

"M. le Grand Écuyer, my retreat is the archbishopric of Paris and L'Île Notre-Dame. I'll make it a place strong enough to keep me from being taken."

"And yours?" he said to De Thou.

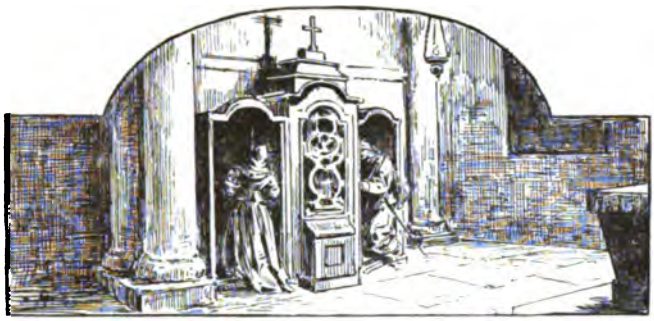
"At your side," murmured De Thou, lowering his eyes, unwilling even to give importance to his resolution by the proneness of his look.

"You will have it so? Well! I accept," said Cinq-Mars; "and my sacrifice herein, dear friend, is greater than yours." Then turning towards the assembly, "Gentlemen, I see in you the last men of France, for after the Montmorencys and the Soissons, you alone dare lift a head free and worthy of our old liberty. If Richelieu triumph, the ancient bases of the monarchy will crumble with us. The court will reign alone, in the place of the parliaments, the old barriers, and at the same time the powerful supports of the royal authority. Let us be conquerors, and France will owe to us the preservation of her ancient manners and her time-honored guarantees. And now, gentlemen, it were a pity to spoil the ball on this account. You

hear the music. The ladies await you. Let us go and dance."

"The cardinal shall pay the fiddlers," added Gondi.

The young men applauded with a laugh; and all re-ascended to the ball-room as lightly as they would have gone to the battle-field.



CHAPTER XXI.

THE CONFESSIONAL.

'T is for you, fatal beauty, that I come to this terrible place!

LEWIS, *The Monk.*

IT was the day following the assembly that had taken place in the house of Marion de Lorme. A thick snow covered the roofs of Paris and settled in its large gutters and streets, where it arose in gray heaps, furrowed by the wheels of carriages.

It was eight o'clock, and the night was dark. The tumult of the city was silent on account of the thick carpet the winter had spread for it, and which deadened the sound of the wheels over the stones, and of the feet of men and horses. In a narrow street that winds round the old church of St. Eustache, a man, enveloped in his cloak, slowly walked up and down, constantly watching for the appearance of some one. He often seated himself upon one of the posts of the church, sheltering himself from the falling snow under one of the statues of saints which jutted out from the roof of

the building, stretching over the narrow path like birds of prey, which, about to make a stoop, have folded their wings. Often, too, the old man, opening his cloak, beat his arms against his breast to warm himself, or blew upon his fingers, ill protected from the cold by a pair of buff gloves reaching nearly to the elbow. At last he saw a slight shadow gliding along the wall.

"Ah, Santa Maria! what villanous countries are these of the North!" said a woman's voice, trembling. "Ah, the duchy of Mantua! would I were back there again, Grandchamp!"

"Pshaw! don't speak so loud," said the old domestic, abruptly. "The walls of Paris have Cardinalist ears, and more especially the walls of the churches. Has your mistress entered? My master awaits her at the door."

"Yes, yes; she has gone in."

"Be silent," said Grandchamp. "The sound of the clock is cracked. That's a bad sign."

"That clock has sounded the hour of a rendezvous."

"For me, it sounds like a passing-bell. But be silent, Laure; here are three cloaks passing."

They allowed three men to pass. Grandchamp followed them, made sure of the road they took, and returned to his seat, sighing deeply.

"The snow is cold, Laure, and I am old. M. le Grand might have chosen another of his men to keep watch for him while he's making love. It's all very well for you to carry love-letters and ribbons and portraits and such trash, but for me, I ought to be treated with more consideration. M. le Maréchal would not have done so.

Old domestics give respectability to a house, and should be themselves respected."

"Has your master arrived long, *caro amico?*"

"Eh, *cara, caro!* leave me in peace. We had both been freezing for an hour when you came. I should have had time to smoke three Turkish pipes. Attend to your business, and go and look to the other doors of the church, and see that no suspicious person is prowling about. Since there are but two vedettes, they must beat about well."

"Ah, what a thing it is to have no one to whom to say a friendly word when it is so cold! and my poor mistress! to come on foot all the way from the Hôtel de Nevers. Ah, *amore! qui regna amore!*"

"Come, Italian, wheel about, I tell thee. Let me hear no more of thy musical tongue."

"Ah, Santa Maria! What a harsh voice, dear Grandchamp! You were much more amiable at Chaumont, in *Turena*, when you talked to me of *miei occhi neri.*"

"Hold thy tongue, prattler! Once more, thy Italian is only good for buffoons and rope-dancers, or to accompany the learned dogs."

"Ah, *Italia mia!* Grandchamp, listen to me, and you shall hear the language of the gods. If you were a gallant man, like him who wrote this for a Laure like me!"

And she began to hum, —

"Lieti fiori e felici, e ben nate erbe
Che Madona pensando premer sole;
Piaggia ch'ascolti su dolci parole
E del bel piede alcun vestigio serbe."

The old soldier was but little used to the voice of a young girl; and in general when a woman spoke to him, the tone he assumed in answering always fluctuated between an awkward compliment and an ebullition of temper. But on this occasion he appeared moved by the Italian song, and twisted his mustache, which was always with him a sign of embarrassment and distress. He even emitted a rough sound something like a laugh, and said,—

"Pretty enough, *mordieu!* that recalls to my mind the siege of Casal; but be silent, little one. I have not yet heard the Abbé Quillet come. This troubles me. He ought to have been here before our two young people; and for some time past—"

Laure, who was afraid of being sent alone to the Place St. Eustache, answered that she was quite sure he had gone in, and continued,—

"Ombrose selve, ove percote il sole
Che vi fa co' suoi raggi alte e superbe."

"Hum!" said the worthy old soldier, grumbling. "I have my feet in the snow, and a gutter runs down on my head, and there 's death at my heart; and you sing to me of violets, of the sun, and of grass, and of love. Be silent!"

And retiring farther in the recess of the church, he leaned his gray head upon his hands, pensive and motionless. Laure dared not again speak to him.

While her waiting-woman had gone to find Grandchamp, the young and trembling Marie with a timid hand had pushed open the folding-door of the church.

She there found Cinq-Mars standing, disguised, and anxiously awaiting her. As soon as she recognized him, she advanced with rapid steps into the church, holding her velvet mask over her face, and hastened to take refuge in a confessional, while Henri carefully closed the door of the church by which she had entered. He made sure that it could not be opened on the outside, and then followed his betrothed to kneel within the place of penitence. Arrived an hour before her, with his old valet, he had found this open, — a certain and understood sign that the Abbé Quillet, his tutor, awaited him at the accustomed place. His care to prevent any surprise had made him remain himself to guard the entrance until the arrival of Marie. Delighted as he was at the punctuality of the good abbé, he would still scarcely leave his post to thank him. He was a second father to him in all but authority; and he acted towards the good priest without much ceremony.

The old parish church of St. Eustache was dark. Besides the perpetual lamp, there were only four *flambeaux* of yellow wax, which, attached above the fonts against the principal pillars, cast a red glimmer upon the blue and black marble of the empty church. The light scarcely penetrated the deep niches of the aisles of the sacred building. In one of the chapels — the darkest of them — was the confessional, of which we have before spoken, whose high iron grating and thick double planks left visible only the small dome and the wooden cross. Here on either side, knelt Cinq-Mars and Marie de Mantua. They could scarcely see each other, but found that the Abbé Quillet, seated between them, was there

awaiting them. They could see through the little grating the shadow of his hood. Henri d'Effiat approached slowly; he was regulating, as it were, the remainder of his destiny. It was not before his king that he was about to appear, but before a more powerful sovereign, before her for whom he had undertaken his immense work. He was about to test her faith; and he trembled.

He trembled still more when his young betrothed knelt opposite to him; he trembled, because at the sight of this angel he could not help feeling all the happiness he might lose. He dared not speak first, and remained for an instant contemplating her head in the shade, that young head upon which rested all his hopes. Despite his love, whenever he looked upon her he could not refrain from a kind of dread at having undertaken so much for a girl, whose passion was but a feeble reflection of his own, and who perhaps would not appreciate all the sacrifices he had made for her, — bending the firm character of his mind to the compliances of a courtier, condemning it to the intrigues and sufferings of ambition, abandoning it to profound combinations, to criminal meditations, to the gloomy labors of a conspirator. Hitherto, in their chaste and secret interviews, she had always received each fresh intelligence of his progress with the transports of pleasure of a child, but without appreciating the labors of each of these so arduous steps that lead to honors, and always asking him with naïveté when he would be constable, and when they should marry, as if she were asking him when he would come to the Carousel, or whether the weather was fine. Hitherto, he had smiled at these

questions and this ignorance, pardonable at eighteen, in a girl born to a throne and accustomed to a grandeur, natural to her, which she found around her on her entrance into life; but now he made more serious reflections upon this character. And when, but just quitting the imposing assembly of conspirators, representatives of all the orders of the kingdom, his ear, wherein still resounded the masculine voices that had sworn to undertake a vast war, was struck with the first words of her for whom that war was commenced, he feared for the first time lest this naïveté should be in reality simple levity, not coming from the heart. He resolved to sound it.

"Oh, heavens! how I tremble, Henri!" she said as she entered the confessional; "you make me come without guards, without a coach. I always tremble lest I should be seen by my people coming out of the Hôtel de Nevers. How much longer must I yet conceal myself like a criminal? The queen was very angry when I avowed the matter to her; and whenever she speaks to me of it, 't is with her severe air that you know, and which always makes me weep. Oh, I am terribly afraid!"

She was silent; Cinq-Mars replied only with a deep sigh.

"How! you do not speak to me!" she said.

"Are these, then, all your terrors?" asked Cinq-Mars, bitterly.

"Can I have greater? Oh, *mon ami*, in what a tone, with what a voice do you address me! Are you angry because I came too late?"

"Too soon, Madame, much too soon, for the things you are to hear, — for I see you are far from prepared for them."

Marie, affected at the gloomy and bitter tone of his voice, began to weep.

"Alas, what have I done," she said, "that you should call me Madame, and treat me thus harshly?"

"Be tranquil," replied Cinq-Mars, but with irony in his tone. "'T is not, indeed, you who are guilty; but I, — I alone; not towards you, but for you."

"Have you done wrong, then? Have you ordered the death of any one? Oh, no, I am sure you have not, you are so good!"

"What!" said Cinq-Mars, "are you as nothing in my designs? Did I misconstrue your thoughts when you looked at me in the queen's boudoir? Can I no longer read in your eyes? Was the fire which animated them that of a love for Richelieu? That admiration which you promised to him who should dare to say all to the king, where is it? Is it all a falsehood?"

Marie burst into tears.

"You still speak to me with bitterness," she said; "I have not deserved it. Do you suppose, because I speak not of this fearful conspiracy, that I have forgotten it? Do you not see me miserable at the thought? Must you see my tears? Behold them; I shed enough in secret. Henri, believe that if I have avoided this terrible subject in our last interviews, it is from the fear of learning too much. Have I any other thought than that of your danger? Do I not know that it is for me you incur them? Alas! if you fight for me, have I not also to

sustain attacks no less cruel? Happier than I, you have only to combat hatred, while I struggle against friendship. The cardinal will oppose to you men and weapons; but the queen, the gentle Anne of Austria, employs only tender advice, caresses, sometimes tears."

"Touching and invincible constraint to make you accept a throne," said Cinq-Mars, bitterly. "I well conceive you must need some efforts to resist such seductions; but first, Madame, I must release you from your vows."

"Alas, Great Heaven! what is there, then, against us?"

"There is God above us, and against us," replied Henri, in a severe tone; "the king has deceived me."

There was an agitated movement on the part of the abbé.

Marie exclaimed, "I foresaw it; this is the misfortune I dreamed and dreamed of! Is it I who caused it?"

"He deceived me, as he pressed my hand," continued Cinq-Mars; "he betrayed me by the villain Joseph, whom an offer has been made to me to poniard."

The abbé gave a start of horror which half opened the door of the confessional.

"Oh, Father, fear nothing," said Henri d'Effiat; "your pupil will never strike such blows. Those I prepare will be heard from afar, and the broad day will light them up; but there remains a duty — a sacred duty — for me to fulfil. Behold your son sacrifice himself before you! Alas! I have not lived long in the sight of

happiness, and I am about, perhaps, to destroy it by your hand, that consecrated it."

As he spoke, he opened the light grating which separated him from his old tutor; the latter, still observing an extraordinary silence, passed his hood over his forehead.

"Restore this nuptial ring to the Duchesse de Mantua," said Cinq-Mars, in a tone less firm; "I cannot keep it unless she give it me a second time, for I am not the same whom she promised to espouse."

The priest hastily seized the ring, and passed it through the opposite grating; this mark of indifference astonished Cinq-Mars.

"What! Father," he said, "are you also changed?"

Marie wept no longer; but raising her angelic voice, which awakened a faint echo along the aisles of the church, as the softest sigh of the organ, she said, returning the ring to Cinq-Mars, —

"Oh, dearest, be not angry! I comprehend you not. Can we break asunder what God has just united, and can I leave you, when I know you are unhappy? If the king no longer loves you, at least you may be assured he will not harm you, since he has not harmed the cardinal, whom he never loved. Do you think yourself undone, because he is perhaps unwilling to separate from his old servant? Well, let us await the return of his friendship; forget these conspirators, who affright me. If they give up hope, I shall thank Heaven, for then I shall no longer tremble for you. Why needlessly afflict ourselves? The queen loves us, and we are both very young; let us wait. The future is beautiful,

since we are united, and sure of ourselves. Tell me what the king said to you at Chambord. I followed you long with my eyes. Heavens! how sad to me was that hunting party!"

"He has betrayed me, I tell you," answered Cinq-Mars. "Yet who could have believed it, that saw him press our hands, turning from his brother to me, and to the Duc de Bouillon, making himself acquainted with the minutest details of the conspiracy, of the very day on which Richelieu was to be arrested at Lyons, fixing himself the place of his exile (our party desired his death, but the recollection of my father made me ask his life). The king said that he himself would direct the whole affair at Perpignan; yet just before, Joseph, that foul spy, had issued from out of the *cabinet du Lys*. Oh, Marie! shall I own it? at the moment I heard this, my very soul was tossed. I doubted everything; it seemed to me that the centre of the world was unhinged when I found truth quit the heart of the king. I saw our whole edifice crumble to the ground; another hour, and the conspiracy would vanish away, and I should lose you forever. One means remained; I employed it."

"What means?" said Marie.

"The treaty with Spain was in my hand; I signed it."

"Ah, heavens! destroy it."

"It is gone."

"Who bears it?"

"Fontrailles."

"Recall him."

"He will, ere this, have passed the defiles of Oleron,"

said Cinq-Mars, rising up. "All is ready at Madrid, all at Sedan. Armies await me, Marie, — armies! Richelieu is in the midst of them. He totters; it needs but one blow to overthrow him, and you are mine forever, — forever the wife of the triumphant Cinq-Mars."

"Of Cinq-Mars the rebel," she said, sighing.

"Well, have it so, the rebel; but no longer the favorite. Rebel, criminal, worthy of the scaffold, I know it," cried the impassioned youth, falling on his knees; "but a rebel for love, a rebel for you, whom my sword will at last achieve for me."

"Alas, a sword imbrued in the blood of his country! Is it not a poniard?"

"Pause! for pity, pause, Marie! Let kings abandon me, let warriors forsake me, I shall only be the more firm; but a word from you will vanquish me, and once again the time for reflection will be passed from me. Yes, I am a criminal; and that is why I still hesitate to think myself worthy of you. Abandon me, Marie; take back the ring."

"I cannot," she said; "for I am your wife, whatever you be."

"You hear her, Father!" exclaimed Cinq-Mars, transported with happiness; "bless this second union, the work of devotion, even more beautiful than that of love. Let her be mine while I live."

Without answering, the abbé opened the door of the confessional and had quitted the church ere Cinq-Mars had time to rise and follow him.

"Where are you going? What is the matter?" he cried.

"I see, rising up," Ai is ready at Madame d'
Ar[illegible]ae, Marie; [illegible]! Riche-
[illegible] them. He totters; [illegible] for
[illegible] him, and you are mine forever, —
[illegible] triumphant Cinq-Mars."

"[illegible] rebel," she said, sighing,
"[illegible] rebel; but no longer the favor-
[illegible] worthy of the scaffold, I know it."

"Never," [illegible], falling on his knees: "but
[illegible] for you, whom my sword will at
[illegible]

[illegible] in the blood of his country!

[illegible], Marie! Let Kings abandon
[illegible] I shall only be the more
[illegible] will vanquish me, and once
[illegible] will be passed from me
[illegible] that is why I still hesitate to
[illegible] Abandon me, Marie; take
[illegible]

"[illegible]," she said, "for I am your wife whatever

"Father!" exclaimed Cinq-Mars, trans-
[illegible]ness; "[illegible] second union, the
[illegible] more beautiful than that of love
[illegible] I owe."

[illegible] the child opened the door of the
[illegible] and quitted the church, Cinq-Mars
[illegible] and follow him.

"[illegible] pale? What is the matter?" he

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THE CONFESSIONAL

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But no one answered.

"Do not call out, in the name of Heaven!" said Marie, "or I am lost; he has doubtless heard some one in the church."

But D'Effiat, agitated, and without answering her, rushed forth, and sought his late tutor through the church, but in vain. Drawing his sword, he proceeded to the entrance which Grandchamp had to guard; he called him and listened.

"Now let him go," said a voice at the corner of the street; and at the same moment was heard the galloping of horses.

"Grandchamp, wilt thou answer?" cried Cinq-Mars.

"Help, Henri, my dear boy!" exclaimed the voice of the Abbé Quillet.

"Whence come you? You endanger me," said the grand écuyer, approaching him.

But he saw that his poor tutor, without a hat in the falling snow, was in a most deplorable condition.

"They stopped me, and they robbed me," he cried. "The villains, the assassins! they prevented me from calling out; they stopped my mouth with a handkerchief."

At this noise, Grandchamp at length came rubbing his eyes, like one just awakened. Laure, terrified, ran into the church to her mistress; all hastily followed her to reassure Marie, and then surrounded the old abbé.

"The villains! they bound my hands as you see. There were more than twenty of them; they took from me the key of the side door of the church."

"How! just now?" said Cinq-Mars; "and why did you quit us?"

"Quit you! why they have kept me there two hours."

"Two hours!" cried Henri, terrified.

"Ah, miserable old man that I am!" said Grandchamp; "I have slept while my master was in danger. It is the first time."

"You were not with us then in the confessional?" continued Cinq-Mars, anxiously, while Marie tremblingly pressed against his arm.

"What!" said the abbé, "did you not see the rascal to whom they gave my key?"

"No! whom?" cried all at once.

"Father Joseph," answered the good priest.

"Fly! you are lost!" cried Marie.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE STORM.

"Blow, blow, thou winter wind;
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude.
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly.
Most friendship is feigning; most loving mere folly."

AMID that long and superb chain of the Pyrenees which forms the embattled isthmus of the peninsula, in the centre of those blue pyramids, covered in gradation with snow, forests, and downs, there opens a narrow defile, a path cut in the dried-up bed of a perpendicular torrent; it circulates among rocks, glides under bridges of frozen snow, twines along the edges of inundated precipices to scale the adjacent mountains of Urdoz and Oleron, and at last rising over their unequal ridges, turns their nebulous peak into a new country which has also its mountains and its depths, and quitting France, descends into Spain. Never has the hoof of the mule left its trace in

these windings; man himself can with difficulty stand upright there, even with the hempen boots, which cannot slip, and the hook of the pike-staff to force into the crevices of the rocks.

In the fine summer months the *pastour*, in his brown cape, and his black long-bearded ram lead hither flocks, whose flowing wool sweeps the turf. Nothing is heard in these rugged places but the sound of the large bells which the sheep carry, and whose irregular tinklings produce unexpected harmonies, casual gamuts, which astonish the traveller and delight the savage and silent shepherd. But when the long month of September comes, a shroud of snow spreads itself from the peak of the mountains down to their base, respecting only this deeply excavated path, a few gorges opened by torrents, and some rocks of granite, which stretch out their fantastical forms, like the bones of a buried world.

It is then that light troops of chamois make their appearance, with their twisted horns extending over their backs, spring from rock to rock as if driven before the wind, and take possession of their aërial desert. Flights of ravens and crows incessantly wheel round and round in the gulfs and natural wells which they transform into dark dovecots, while the brown bear, followed by her shaggy family, who sport and tumble around her in the snow, slowly descends from their retreat invaded by the frost. But these are neither the most savage nor the most cruel inhabitants that winter brings into these mountains; the daring smuggler raises for himself a dwelling of wood on the very boundary of nature and of politics. There unknown treaties, secret exchanges,

are made between the two Navarres, amid fogs and winds.

It was in this narrow path on the frontiers of France that, about two months after the scenes we have witnessed in Paris, two travellers, coming from Spain, stopped at midnight, fatigued and dismayed. They heard musket-shots in the mountain.

"The scoundrels! how they have pursued us!" said one of them. "I can go no farther; but for you I should have been taken."

"And you will be taken still, as well as that infernal paper, if you lose your time in words; there is another volley on the rock of St. Pierre-de-l'Aigle. Up there, they suppose we have gone in the direction of the Limaçon; but, below, they will see the contrary. Descend; it is doubtless a patrol hunting smugglers. Descend."

"But how? I cannot see."

"Never mind, descend. Take my arm."

"Hold me; my boots slip," said the first traveller, stamping on the edge of the rock to make sure of the solidity of the ground before trusting himself upon it.

"Go on; go on!" said the other, pushing him. "There 's one of the rascals passing over our heads."

And, in fact, the shadow of a man, armed with a long gun, was reflected on the snow. The two adventurers stood motionless. The man passed on. They continued their descent.

"They will take us," said the one who was supporting the other. "They have turned us. Give me your confounded parchment. I wear the dress of a smuggler, and I can pass for one seeking an asylum among

them; but you would have no resource with your laced dress."

"You are right," said his companion; and resting his foot against the edge of the rock, and reclining on the slope, he gave him a roll of hollow wood.

A gun was fired; and a ball buried itself, hissing, in the snow at their feet.

"Marked!" said the first. "Roll down. If you are not dead when you get to the bottom, take the road you see before you. On the left of the hollow is Santa Maria. But turn to the right; cross Oleron; and you are on the road to Pau and are saved. Go; roll down."

As he spoke, he pushed his comrade, and without condescending to look after him, and himself neither ascending nor descending, followed the flank of the mountain horizontally, hanging on by rocks, branches, and even by plants, with the strength and energy of a wild-cat, and soon found himself on firm ground before a small wooden hut, through which a light was visible. The adventurer went all round it, like a hungry wolf round a sheep-fold, and applying his eye to one of the openings, apparently saw what determined him, for without further hesitation he pushed the tottering door, which was not even fastened by a latch. The whole hut shook with the blow he had given it. He then saw that it was divided into two cabins by a partition. A large *flambeau* of yellow wax lighted the first. There, a young girl, pale and fearfully thin, was crouched in a corner on the damp floor, just where the melted snow ran under the planks of the cottage. Very long black hair, entangled and covered with dust, fell in disorder

over her coarse brown dress; the red hood of the Pyrenees covered her head and shoulders. Her eyes were cast down; and she was spinning with a small distaff attached to her waist. The entry of a man did not appear to move her in the least.

"Ha! *la moza*,[1] get up and give me something to drink. I am tired and thirsty."

The young girl did not answer, and without raising her eyes, continued to spin assiduously.

"Dost hear?" said the stranger, thrusting her with his foot. "Go and tell thy master that a friend wishes to see him; but first give me some drink. I shall sleep here."

She answered in a hoarse voice, still spinning, —

"I drink the snow that melts on the rock, or the green scum that floats on the water of the swamp. But when I have spun well, they give me water from the iron spring. When I sleep, the cold lizard crawls over my face; but when I have well cleaned a mule, they throw me hay. The hay is warm; the hay is good and warm. I put it under my marble feet."

"What tale art telling me?" said Jacques. "I spoke not of thee."

She continued, —

"They make me hold a man while they kill him. Oh, what blood I have had on my hands! God forgive them! — if that be possible. They make me hold his head, and the bucket filled with crimson water. Oh, Heaven! — I, who was the bride of God! They throw their bodies into the abyss of snow; but the vulture

[1] Girl.

finds them; he lines his nest with their hair. I now see thee full of life; I shall see thee bloody, pale, and dead."

The adventurer, shrugging his shoulders, began to whistle as he passed the second door. Within he found the man he had seen through the chinks of the cabin. He wore the blue *berret* cap of the Basques on one side, and, enveloped in an ample cloak, seated on the pack-saddle of a mule, and bending over a large brazier, smoked a cigar, and from time to time drank from a leather bottle at his side. The light of the brazier showed his full yellow face, as well as the chamber, in which mule-saddles were ranged round the *brasero* as seats. He raised his head without altering his position.

"Oh, oh! is it thou, Jacques?" he said. "Is it thou? Although 't is four years since I saw thee, I recognize thee. Thou art not changed, brigand! There 't is still, thy great knave's face. Sit down there, and take a drink."

"Yes, here I am. But how the devil camest thou here? I thought thou wert a judge, Houmain!"

"And I thought thou wert a Spanish captain, Jacques!"

"Ah! I was so for a time, and then a prisoner. But I got out of the thing very snugly, and have taken again to the old trade, — the free life, the good smuggling work."

"*Viva! viva! Jaleo!*"[1] cried Houmain. "We brave fellows can turn our hands to everything. Thou camest by the other passes, I suppose, for I have not seen thee since I returned to the trade."

[1] A common Spanish oath.

"Yes, yes; I have passed where thou wilt never pass," said Jacques.

"And what hast got?"

"A new merchandise. My mules will come to-morrow."

"Silk sashes, cigars, or linen?"

"Thou wilt know in time, *amigo*," said the ruffian. "Give me the skin. I'm thirsty."

"Here, drink. It's true Valdepenas! We're so jolly here, we *bandoleros! Ay! jaleo! jaleo!* come, drink; our friends are coming."

"What friends?" said Jacques, dropping the horn.

"Don't be uneasy, but drink. I'll tell thee all about it presently, and then we'll sing the Andalusian Tirana." [1]

The adventurer took the horn, and assumed an appearance of ease.

"And who's that great she-devil I saw out there?" he said. "She seems half dead."

"Oh, no! she's only mad. Drink; I'll tell thee all about her."

And taking from his red sash a long poniard denticulated on each side like a saw, Houmain used it to stir up the fire, and said with vast gravity, —

"Thou must know first, if thou dost not know it already, that down below there [he pointed towards France], the old wolf Richelieu carries all before him."

"Ah, ah!" said Jacques.

"Yes; they call him *the king of the king.* Thou knowest? There is, however, a young man almost as

[1] A kind of ballad.

strong as he, and whom they call M. le Grand. This young fellow commands almost the whole army of Perpignan at this moment. He arrived there a month ago; but the old fox is still at Narbonne, — a very cunning fox indeed. As to the king, he is sometimes this, sometimes that [as he spoke, Houmain turned his hand outwards and inwards], *between zist and zest;* but while he is determining, I am for *zist*, — that is to say, I 'm Cardinalist. I 've been regularly doing business for my Lord since the first job he gave me, three years ago. I 'll tell thee about it. He wanted some men of firmness and spirit for a little expedition, and sent for me to be judge-advocate."

"Ah! a very pretty post, I've heard."

"Yes, 't is a trade like ours, where they sell cord instead of thread; but it is less honest, for they kill men oftener. But 't is also more profitable; everything has its price."

"Very properly so," said Jacques.

"Behold me, then, in a red robe. I helped to give a yellow one and brimstone to a fine fellow, who was curé at Loudun, and who had got into a convent of nuns, like a wolf in a fold; and a fine thing he made of it."

"Ha, ha, ha! that 's very droll!" laughed Jacques.

"Drink," said Houmain. "Yes, Jago, I saw him after the affair, reduced to a little black heap like this charcoal. See, this charcoal at the end of my poniard. What things we are! That 's just what we shall all come to when we go to the Devil."

"Oh, none of these pleasantries!" said the other, very gravely. "You know that I am religious."

"Well, I don't say no; it may be so," said Houmain, in the same tone. "There's Richelieu a cardinal! But no matter. Thou must know, then, as I was advocate-general, I advocated —"

"Ah, thou art quite a wit!"

"Yes, a little. But as I was saying, I advocated into my own pocket five hundred piastres, for Armand Duplessis pays his people well, and there's nothing to be said against that, except that the money's not his own; but that's the way with us all. I determined to invest this money in our old trade; and I returned here. Business goes on well. There is sentence of death out against us; and our goods, of course, sell for half as much again as before."

"What's that?" exclaimed Jacques; "lightning at this time of year?"

"Yes, the storms are beginning; we've had two already. We are in the clouds. Dost hear the roll of the thunder? But this is nothing; come, drink. 'T is almost one in the morning; we'll finish the skin and the night together. As I was telling thee, I made acquaintance with our president,—a great scoundrel called Laubardemont. Dost know him?"

"Yes, a little," said Jacques; "he's a regular miser. But never mind that; go on."

"Well, as we had nothing to conceal from one another, I told him of my little commercial plans, and asked him, when any good jobs presented themselves, to think of his judicial comrade; and I've had no cause to complain of him."

"Ah!" said Jacques, "and what has he done?"

"Why, first, two years ago, he himself brought me, on horseback behind him, his niece that thou 'st seen out there."

"His niece!" cried Jacques, rising; "and thou treat'st her like a slave! *Demonio!*"

"Drink," said Houmain, quietly stirring the brazier with his poniard; "he himself desired it should be so. Sit down."

Jacques did so.

"I don't think," continued the smuggler, "that he 'd even be sorry to know she was — dost understand? — to hear she was under the snow rather than above it; but he would not put her there himself, because he 's a good relative, as he himself said."

"And as I know," said Jacques; "but go on."

"Thou mayst suppose that a man like him, who lives at court, does not like to have a mad niece in his house. The thing is self-evident; if I 'd continued to play my part of man of the robe, I should have done the same in a similar case. But here, as you perceive, we don't care much for appearances; and I 've taken her for a servant. She has shown more good sense than I expected, although she has rarely ever spoken more than a single word, and at first came the delicate over us. Now she rubs down a mule like a groom. She has had a slight fever for the last few days; but 't will pass off one way or the other. But I say, don't tell Laubardemont that she still lives; he 'd think 't was for the sake of economy I 've kept her for a servant."

"How! is he here?" cried Jacques.

"Drink!" replied the phlegmatic Houmain, who him-

self set the example most assiduously, and began to half shut his eyes with a languishing air. "'T is the second transaction I've had with this Laubardemont, — or demon, or whatever the name is; but 't is a good devil of a demon, at all events. I love him as I do my eyes; and I will drink his health out of this bottle of Jurançon here. 'T is the wine of a jolly fellow, the late King Henri. How happy we are here! — Spain on the right hand, France on the left; the wine-skin on one side, the bottle on the other! The bottle! I've left all for the bottle!"

As he spoke, he knocked off the neck of a bottle of white wine. After taking a long draught, he continued, while the stranger closely watched him, —

"Yes, he's here; and his feet must be rather cold, for he's been waiting about the mountains ever since sunset, with his guards and our comrades. Thou knowest our *bandoleros*, the true *contrabandistas?*"

"Ah! and what do they hunt?" said Jacques.

"Ah, that's the joke!" answered the drunkard. "'T is to arrest two rascals, who want to bring here sixty thousand Spanish soldiers in paper in their pocket. You don't, perhaps, quite understand me, *croquant.* Well, 't is as I tell thee, — in their own pockets."

"Ay, ay! I understand," said Jacques, loosening his poniard in his sash, and looking at the door.

"Very well, devil's-skin, let's sing the Tirana. Take the bottle, throw away the cigar, and sing."

With these words the drunken host began to sing in Spanish, interrupting his song with bumpers, which he threw down his throat, leaning back for the greater

ease, while Jacques, still seated, looked at him gloomily by the light of the brazier, and meditated what he should do.

"Yo que soï contrabandista
I campo por mi respeto,
A todos los desafio,
Puis a nadie tengo miedo.

"Ay! jaleo! Muchachas
Quien me merca un hilo negro?"[1]

A flash of lightning entered the small window, and filled the room with a sulphurous odor. A fearful clap immediately followed; the cabin shook; and a beam fell outside.

"Hallo, the house!" cried the drunken man; "the Devil's among us; and our friends are not come!"

"Sing!" said Jacques, drawing the pack upon which he was close to that of Houmain.

The latter drank to encourage himself, and then continued,—

"Mi caballo esta cansado,
Y yo me marcho corriendo.

"Ay! ay! que viene la ronda,
Y se mueve el tiroteo;
Ay! ay! cavallito mio,
Ay! saca me deste aprieto.

"Viva, viva mi cavallo,
Cavallo mio carreto;
Ay! jaleo! Muchachas, ay! jaleo—"[2]

[1] "I, who am a contrabandist, am respected by all. I take care of myself, and fear no one. *Ay! jaleo!* Girls, who'll buy some black thread?"

[2] "My horse is tired. I go by his side running. *Ay! ay!* here comes the round, and there's a shot! *Ay*, my little horse! get me out of this scrape. *Viva*, my horse! *Ay! jaleo!* Girls," etc.

As he ended, he felt his seat totter, and fell backwards; Jacques, thus freed from him, sprang towards the door, when it opened, and his head struck against the cold, pale face of the mad-woman. He recoiled.

"The judge!" she said, as she entered; and she fell prostrate on the cold ground.

Jacques had already passed one foot over her; but another face appeared, livid and surprised, — that of a very tall man, enveloped in a cloak covered with snow. He again recoiled, and laughed a laugh of terror and rage. It was Laubardemont, followed by armed men; they looked at one another.

"Ah, com-r-a-d-e, yo-u raa-scal!" hiccuped Houmain, rising with difficulty; "thou 'rt a Royalist."

But when he saw these two men, who seemed petrified by each other, he became silent, as conscious of his intoxication; and he reeled forward to raise up the mad-woman, who was still lying between the judge and the captain. The former spoke first.

"Are you not he we have been pursuing?"

"It is he!" said the armed men, with one voice; "the other has escaped."

Jacques receded to the split planks that formed the tottering wall of the hut; enveloping himself in his cloak, like a bear forced against a tree by the hounds, and wishing to gain a moment's respite for reflection, he said firmly, —

"The first who passes that brazier and the body of that girl is a dead man."

And he drew a long poniard from his cloak. At this moment Houmain, kneeling, turned the head of the girl.

Her eyes were closed; he drew her towards the brazier, which lighted up her face.

"Ah, heavens!" cried Laubardemont, forgetting himself in his fright; "Jeanne again!"

"Be calm, my lo-lord," said Houmain, trying to open the eyelids, which closed again, and to raise her head, which fell back again like wet linen; "be, be-calm! Do-n't ex-cite yourself; she 's dead, de-ci-dedly."

Jacques put his foot on the body as on a barrier, and looking with a ferocious laugh in the face of Laubardemont, said to him in a low voice, —

"Let me pass, and I will not compromise thee, courtier; I will not tell that she was thy niece, and that I am thy son."

Laubardemont collected himself, looked at his men, who pressed around him with advanced carabines; and signing them to retire a few steps, he answered in a very low voice, —

"Give me the treaty, and thou shalt pass."

"Here it is, in my girdle; touch it, and I will call you my father aloud. What will thy master say?"

"Give it me, and I will pardon thy life."

"Let me pass, and I will pardon thy having given me that life."

"Still the same, brigand?"

"Ay, assassin."

"What matters to thee that boy conspirator?" asked the judge.

"What matters to thee that old man who reigns?" answered the other.

"Give me that paper; I 've sworn to have it."

"Leave it with me; I've sworn to carry it back."

"What can be thy oath and thy God?" demanded Laubardemont.

"And thine?" replied Jacques. "Is't the crucifix of red-hot iron?"

Here Houmain, rising between them, laughing and staggering, said to the judge, slapping him on the shoulder, —

"You are a long time coming to an understanding, friend; do-on't you know him of old? He's a very good fellow."

"I? no!" cried Laubardemont, aloud; "I never saw him before."

At this moment, Jacques, who was protected by the drunkard and the smallness of the crowded chamber, sprang violently against the weak planks that formed the wall, and by a blow of his heel knocked two of them out, and passed through the space thus created. The whole side of the cabin was broken; it tottered, and the wind rushed in.

"Hallo! *Demonio! Santo Demonio!* where art going?" cried the smuggler; "thou art breaking my house down, and on the side of the ravine too."

All cautiously approached, tore away the planks that remained, and leaned over the abyss. They contemplated a strange spectacle. The storm raged in all its fury; and it was a storm of the Pyrenees. Enormous flashes of lightning came all at once from all parts of the horizon, and their fires succeeded so quickly that there seemed no interval; they appeared to be a continuous flash. 'T was but rarely the flaming vault would

suddenly become obscure; and it then instantly resumed its glare. It was not the light that seemed strange on this night, but the darkness. The tall thin peaks and whitened rocks stood out from the red background like blocks of marble on a cupola of burning brass, and resembled, amid the snows, the wonders of a volcano; the waters gushed from them like flames; the snow poured down like dazzling lava.

In this moving mass a man was seen struggling, whose efforts only involved him deeper and deeper in the whirling and liquid gulf; his knees were already buried. In vain he clasped his arms round an enormous pyramidal and transparent icicle, which reflected the lightning like a rock of crystal; the icicle itself was melting at its base, and slowly bending over the declivity of the rock. Under the covering of snow, masses of granite were heard striking against each other, as they descended into the vast depths below. Yet they could still save him; a space of scarcely four feet separated him from Laubardemont.

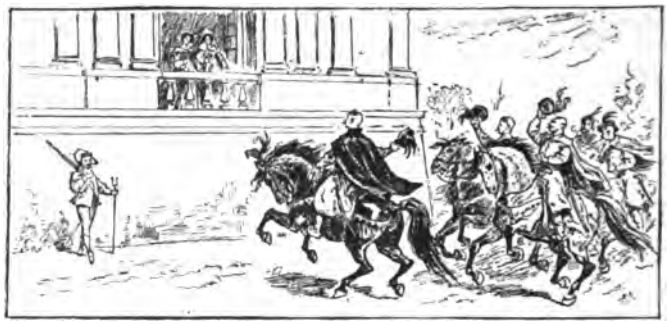
"I sink!" he cried; "hold out to me something, and thou shalt have the treaty."

"Give it me, and I will reach thee this musket," said the judge.

"There it is," replied the ruffian, "since the Devil is for Richelieu!" and taking one hand from the hold of his slippery support, he threw a roll of wood into the cabin. Laubardemont rushed back upon the treaty like a wolf on his prey. Jacques in vain held out his arm; he slowly glided away with the enormous thawing block turned upon him, and was silently buried in the snow.

"Ah, villain," were his last words, "thou hast deceived me! but thou didst not take the treaty from me. I gave it thee, *Father!*" and he disappeared wholly under the thick white bed of snow. Nothing was seen in his place but the glittering flakes which the lightning had ploughed up, as it became extinguished in them; nothing was heard but the rolling of the thunder and the dash of the waters against the rocks, for the men in the half-ruined cabin, grouped round a corpse and a villain, were silent, tongue-tied with horror, and fearing lest God himself should send a thunderbolt upon them.[1]

[1] He lived and died with brigands. Was there not a divine punishment on the family of this judge, to expiate, in some measure, the cruel and pitiless death of poor Grandier, whose blood cries aloud for vengeance? — PATIN, lett. lxv., Dec. 22, 1651.



CHAPTER XXIII.

ABSENCE.

L'absence est le plus grand des maux,
Non pas pour vous, cruelle!

LA FONTAINE.

WHO has not found a charm in watching the clouds of heaven as they pass on? Who has not envied them the freedom of their journeyings through the air, whether rolled in great masses by the wind, and colored by the sun, they advance peacefully, like fleets of dark ships with gilt prows, or sprinkled in light groups, they glide quickly on, airy and elongated, like birds of passage, transparent as vast opals detached from the treasury of the heavens, or glittering with whiteness, like snows from the mountains carried on the wings of the winds? Man is a slow traveller who envies those rapid journeyers; though less rapid than his imagination, they have yet seen in a single day all the places he loves, in remembrance or in hope, — those that have witnessed his happiness or his misery, and those so beautiful countries unknown to us, where we expect to find everything at

once. Doubtless there is not a spot on the whole earth, a wild rock, an arid plain, over which we pass with indifference, that has not been consecrated in the life of some man, and is not painted in his remembrance ; for like battered vessels, before meeting inevitable wreck, we leave some fragment of ourselves on every rock.

Whither go the dark-blue clouds of that storm of the Pyrenees? 'T is the wind of Africa which drives them before it with a fiery breath. They fly ; they roll over one another, growlingly throwing out lightning before them, as their torches, and leaving suspended behind them a long train of rain, like a vaporous robe. Freed by an effort from the rocky defiles that for a moment had arrested their course, they irrigate, in Béarn, the picturesque patrimony of Henri IV.; in Guyenne, the conquests of Charles VII.; in Saintonge, Poitou, and Touraine, those of Charles V. and of Philip Augustus; and at last, slackening their pace above the old domain of Hugh Capet, stop murmuring on the towers of St. Germain.

"Oh, Madame!" exclaimed Marie de Mantua to the queen, "do you see this storm coming up from the south?"

"You often look in that direction, *ma chère*," answered Anne of Austria, leaning on the balcony.

"It is the direction of the sun, Madame."

"And of tempests, you see," said the queen. "Trust in my friendship, my child; these clouds can bring no happiness to you. I would rather see you turn your eyes towards Poland. See the fine people you might command."

At this moment, to avoid the rain, which began to fall, the prince palatine passed rapidly under the windows of the queen, with a numerous suite of young Poles on horseback. Their Turkish vests, with buttons of diamonds, emeralds, and rubies; their green and gray cloaks; the lofty plumes of their horses, and their adventurous air, — gave them a singular *éclat* to which the court had easily become accustomed. They paused for a moment, and the prince made two salutes, while the light animal he rode passed gracefully sideways, keeping his front towards the princesses; prancing and snorting, he shook his mane, and seemed to salute by putting his head between his legs. The whole suite repeated the evolution as they passed. The Princesse Marie had at first shrunk back lest they should see her tears; but the brilliant and flattering spectacle made her return to the balcony, and she could not help exclaiming, —

"How gracefully the palatine rides that beautiful horse! he seems scarce conscious of it."

The queen smiled and said, —

"He is conscious about her who might be his queen to-morrow, if she would but make a sign of the head, and let but one glance from her great black almond-shaped eyes be turned on that throne, instead of always receiving these poor foreigners with poutings as now."

And Anne of Austria kissed the cheek of Marie, who could not refrain from smiling also; but she instantly sunk her head, reproaching herself, and resumed her sadness, which seemed gliding from her. She even needed once more to contemplate the great clouds that hung over the château.

"Poor child," continued the queen, "thou dost all thou canst to be very faithful, and to keep thyself in the melancholy of thy romance. Thou art making thyself ill with weeping when thou shouldst be asleep, and with not eating. Thou passest the night in revery and in writing; but I warn thee, thou wilt get nothing by it, except making thyself thin and less beautiful, and the not being a queen. Thy Cinq-Mars is an ambitious youth, who has lost himself."

Seeing Marie conceal her head in her handkerchief to weep, Anne of Austria for a moment re-entered her chamber, leaving Marie in the balcony, and feigned to be looking for some jewels at her toilet-table; she soon returned, slowly and gravely, to the window. Marie was more calm, and was gazing sorrowfully at the landscape before her, the hills in the distance, and the storm gradually spreading itself.

The queen resumed in a more serious tone, —

"God has been more good to you than your imprudence perhaps deserved, Marie. He has saved you from great danger. You were willing to make great sacrifices, but fortunately they have not been accomplished as you expected. Innocence has saved you from love. You are as one who, thinking she was swallowing a deadly poison, has in reality drunk only pure and harmless water."

"Ah, Madame, what mean you? Am I not unhappy enough already?"

"Do not interrupt me," said the queen; "you will, ere long, see your present position with different eyes. I will not accuse you of ingratitude towards the cardinal;

I have too many reasons for not liking him. I myself witnessed the rise of the conspiracy. Still you should remember, *ma chère*, that he was the only person in France who, against the opinion of the queen-mother and of the court, insisted upon war with the duchy of Mantua, which he recovered from the empire and from Spain, and returned to the Duc de Nevers, your father. Here, in this very château of St. Germain, was signed the treaty which deposed the Duke of Guastalla.[1] You were then very young; they must, however, have told you of it. Yet here, through love alone (I am willing to believe, with yourself, that it is so) a young man of two-and-twenty is ready to get him assassinated."

"Oh, Madame, he is incapable of such a deed. I swear to you that he has refused to adopt it."

"I have begged you, Marie, to let me speak. I know that he is generous and loyal. I am willing to believe that contrary to the custom of our times, he would not go so far as to kill an old man, as did the Chevalier de Guise. But can he prevent his assassination, if his troops make him prisoner? This we cannot say, any more than he. God alone knows the future. It is, at all events, certain that it is for you he attacks him, and, to overthrow him, is preparing civil war, which perhaps is bursting forth at the very moment that we speak, — a war without success. Whichever way it turns, it can only effect evil, for Monsieur is going to abandon the conspiracy."

"How, Madame?"

"Listen to me. I tell you I am certain of it; I need

[1] The 19th of May, 1632.

not explain myself farther. What will the grand écuyer do? The king, as he rightly anticipated, has gone to consult the cardinal. To consult him is to yield to him; but the treaty of Spain is signed. If it be discovered, what can M. de Cinq-Mars do? Do not tremble thus. We will save him; we will save his life, I promise you. There is yet time, I hope."

"Ah, Madame, you hope! I am lost!" cried Marie, half fainting.

"Let us sit down," said the queen; and placing herself near Marie, at the entrance to the chamber, she continued,—

"Doubtless Monsieur will treat for all the conspirators in treating for himself; but exile will be the least punishment, perpetual exile. Behold, then, the Duchesse de Nevers and Mantua, the Princesse Marie de Gonzaga, the wife of M. Henri d'Effiat, Marquis de Cinq-Mars, exiled!"

"Well, Madame, I will follow him into exile. It is my duty; I am his wife!" exclaimed Marie, sobbing. "I would I knew he were already banished and in safety."

"Dreams of eighteen!" said the queen, supporting Marie. "Awake, child, awake! you must. I deny not the good qualities of M. de Cinq-Mars. He has a lofty character, a vast mind, and great courage; but he may no longer be aught for you, and fortunately you are not his wife, or even his betrothed."

"I am his, Madame, — his alone."

"But without the benediction," replied Anne of Austria; "in a word, without marriage. No priest would

have dared, — not even your own; he told me so. Be silent!" she added, putting her two beautiful hands on Marie's lips. "Be silent! You would say that God heard your vow; that you cannot live without him; that your destinies are inseparable from his; that death alone can break your union? The phrases of your age, delicious chimeras of a moment, at which one day you will smile, happy at not having to lament them all your life. Of the many and brilliant women you see around me at court, there is not one but at your age had some beautiful dream of love, like this of yours, who did not form those ties, which they believed indissoluble, and who did not in secret take eternal oaths. Well, these dreams are vanished, these knots broken, these oaths forgotten; and yet you see them happy women and mothers. Surrounded by the honors of their rank, they laugh and dance every night. I again divine what you would say; they loved not as you love, eh? You deceive yourself, my dear child; they loved as much, and wept no less. And here I must make you acquainted with that great mystery which constitutes your despair, because you are ignorant of the malady that devours you. We have a twofold existence, *mon amie:* our internal life, that of our feelings, powerfully works within us, while the external life dominates despite ourselves. We are never independent of men, more especially in an elevated condition. Alone, we think ourselves mistresses of our destiny; but the entrance of two or three people fastens on all our chains, by recalling our rank and our retinue. Nay; shut yourself up and abandon yourself to all the daring and extraordi-

nary resolutions that the passions may raise up in you, to the marvellous sacrifices they may suggest to you. A lackey coming and asking your orders will at once break the charm and bring you back to your real life. It is this contest between your projects and your position which destroys you. You are invariably angry with yourself; you bitterly reproach yourself."

Marie turned away her head.

"Yes, you believe yourself criminal. Pardon yourself, Marie; all men are beings so relative and so dependent one upon another that I know not whether the great retreats of the world that we sometimes see are not made for the world itself. Despair has its pursuits, and solitude its coquetry. It is said that the gloomiest hermits cannot refrain from inquiring what men say of them. This need of public opinion is beneficial, in that it combats, almost always victoriously, that which is irregular in our imagination, and comes to the aid of duties which we too easily forget. One experiences (you will feel it, I hope) in returning to one's proper lot, after the sacrifice of that which had diverted the reason, the satisfaction of an exile returning to his family, of a sick person at sight of the sun after a night afflicted with frightful dreams. It is this feeling of a being returned, as it were, to its natural state that creates the calm which you see in many eyes that have also had their tears,—for there are few women who have not known tears such as yours. You would think yourself perjured if you renounced Cinq-Mars! But nothing binds you; you have more than acquitted yourself towards him by refusing for more than two

years past the royal hands offered you. And after all, what has he done, this impassioned lover? He has elevated himself to reach you; but may not the ambition which here seems to you to have aided love have made use of that love? This young man seems to me too profound, too calm in his political stratagems, too independent in his vast resolutions, in his colossal enterprises, for me to believe him solely occupied by his tenderness. If you have been but a means instead of an end, what would you say?"

"I would still love him," answered Marie. "While he lives, I am his."

"And while I live," said the queen, with firmness, "I will oppose the alliance."

At these last words the rain and hail fell violently on the balcony. The queen took advantage of the circumstance abruptly to leave the room and pass into that where the Duchesse de Chevreuse, Mazarin, Madame de Gueméné, and the prince palatine had been awaiting her for a short time. The queen walked up to them. Marie placed herself in the shade of a curtain, in order to conceal the redness of her eyes. She was at first unwilling to take part in the sprightly conversation; but some words of it attracted her attention. The queen was showing to the Princesse de Gueméné diamonds she had just received from Paris.

"As for this crown, it does not belong to me. The king had it prepared for the future Queen of Poland. Who that is to be, we know not." Then turning towards the prince palatine, "We saw you pass, Prince. Whom were you going to visit?"

"Mademoiselle la Duchesse de Rohan," answered the Pole.

The insinuating Mazarin, who availed himself of every opportunity to worm out secrets, and to make himself necessary by forced confidences, said, approaching the queen, —

"That comes very *à propos*, just as we were speaking of the crown of Poland."

Marie, who was listening, could not hear this, and said to Madame de Gueméné, who was at her side, —

"Is M. de Chabot, then, King of Poland?"

The queen heard that, and was delighted at this touch of pride. In order to develop its germ, she affected an approving attention to the conversation that ensued.

The Princesse de Gueméné exclaimed, —

"Can you conceive such a marriage? We really can't get it out of our heads. This same Mademoiselle de Rohan, whom we have seen so haughty, after having refused the Comte de Soissons, the Duc de Weimar, and the Duc de Nemours, to marry M. de Chabot, a simple gentleman! 'T is really a sad pity! What are we coming to? 'T is impossible to say what it will all end in."

Mazarin added, slyly, —

"What! can it be true? Love at court! a real love! deep! Can it be believed?"

All this time the queen continued opening and shutting and playing with the new crown.

"Diamonds only suit black hair," she said. "Let's see. Let me put it on you, Marie. Why, it suits her to admiration!"

"One would suppose it had been made for Madame la Princesse," said the cardinal.

"I would give the last drop of my blood for it to remain on that brow," said the prince palatine.

Marie, through the tears that were still on her cheek, gave an infantine and involuntary smile, like a ray of sunshine through rain. Then, suddenly blushing deeply, she hastily took refuge in her apartments.

All present laughed. The queen followed her with her eyes, smiled, presented her hand for the Polish ambassador to kiss, and retired to write a letter.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE WORK.

Peu d'espérance doivent avoir les pauvres et menues gens au fait de ce monde, puisque si grand roy y a tant souffert et tant travaillé.

PHILIPPE DE COMINES.

ONE night, before Perpignan, a very unusual event took place. It was ten o'clock; and all were asleep. The slow and almost suspended operations of the siege had rendered the camp and the town inactive. The Spaniards troubled themselves little about the French, all communication towards Catalonia being open as in time of peace; and in the French army men's minds were agitated with that secret anxiety which precedes great events. Yet all was apparently calm; no sound was heard but that of the measured tread of the sentinels. Nothing was seen in the dark night but the red light of the matches of their guns, always smoking, when suddenly the trumpets of the musketeers, of the light-horse, and of the men-at-arms, sounded almost simultaneously, "boot and saddle," and "to horse." All the sentinels

cried to arms; and the sergeants, with *flambeaux*, went from tent to tent, a long pike in their hands, to waken the soldiers, range them in lines, and count them. Some files marched in gloomy silence along the streets of the camp, and took their position in battle array. The sound of the mounted squadrons announced that the heavy cavalry were making the same dispositions. After half an hour of movement the noise ceased, the torches were extinguished, and all again became calm, but the army was on foot.

One of the last tents of the camp shone within as a star with *flambeaux*. On approaching this little white and transparent pyramid, we might have distinguished the shadows of two men reflected on the canvas as they walked to and fro within. Outside several men on horseback were in attendance; inside were De Thou and Cinq-Mars.

To see the pious and wise De Thou thus up and armed at this hour, you might have taken him for one of the chiefs of the revolt. But a closer examination of his serious countenance and mournful expression immediately showed that he blamed it, and allowed himself to be led into it and endangered by it from an extraordinary resolution which aided him to surmount the horror he had of the enterprise itself. From the day when Henri d'Effiat had opened his heart and confided to him its whole secret, he had seen clearly that all remonstrance was vain with a young man so powerfully resolved. He had even understood what M. de Cinq-Mars had not told him, and had seen in the secret union of his friend with the Princesse Marie one of

those ties of love whose mysterious and frequent faults, voluptuous and involuntary derelictions, could not be too soon purified by public benediction. He had comprehended that punishment, impossible to be supported long by a lover, the adored master of that young girl, and who was condemned daily to appear before her as a stranger, to receive political disclosures of marriages they were preparing for her. The day when he received his entire confession, he had done all in his power to prevent Cinq-Mars going so far in his projects as the foreign alliance. He had evoked the gravest recollections and the best feelings, without any other result than rendering the invincible resolution of his friend more rude towards him. Cinq-Mars, it will be recollected, had said to him harshly, "Well, did I ask you to take part in this conspiracy?" And he had desired only to promise not to denounce it; and he had collected all his power against friendship to say, "Expect nothing further from me if you sign this treaty." Yet Cinq-Mars had signed the treaty; and De Thou was still there with him.

The habit of familiarly discussing the projects of his friend had perhaps rendered them less odious to him. His contempt for the vices of the prime minister; his indignation at the servitude of the parliaments to which his family belonged, and at the corruption of justice; the powerful names, and more especially the noble characters of the men who directed the enterprise, — all had contributed to soften down his first painful impression. Having once promised secrecy to M. de Cinq-Mars, he considered himself as in a position to accept in detail

all the secondary disclosures; and since the fortuitous event which had compromised him with the conspirators at the house of Marion de Lorme, he considered himself united to them by honor, and engaged to an inviolable secrecy. Since that time he had seen Monsieur, the Duc de Bouillon, and Fontrailles; they had become accustomed to speak before him without constraint, and he to hear them.

The dangers which threatened his friend now drew him into their vortex like an invincible magnet. His conscience accused him; but he followed Cinq-Mars wherever he went without even, from excess of delicacy, hazarding a single expression which might resemble a personal fear. He had tacitly given up his life, and would have deemed it unworthy of both to manifest a desire to regain it.

The master of the horse was in his cuirass; he was armed, and wore large boots. An enormous pistol, with a lighted match, was placed upon his table between two *flambeaux*. A heavy watch in a brass case lay near the pistol. De Thou, wrapped in a black cloak, sat motionless with folded arms. Cinq-Mars paced backwards and forwards, his arms crossed behind his back, from time to time looking at the hand of the watch, too sluggish in his eyes. He opened the tent, looked up to the heavens, and returned.

"I do not see my star there," said he; "but no matter. She is here in my heart."

"The night is dark," said De Thou.

"Say rather that the time draws nigh. It advances, my friend; it advances. Twenty minutes more, and all

will be accomplished. The army only waits the report of this pistol to commence."

De Thou held in his hand an ivory crucifix, and looking first at the cross, and then towards heaven, "Now," said he, "is the hour to complete the sacrifice. I repent not; but oh, how bitter is the cup of sin to my lips! I had vowed my days to innocence and to the works of the soul, and here I am about to commit a crime, and to draw the sword."

But forcibly seizing the hand of Cinq-Mars, "It is for you, for you!" he added with the enthusiasm of a blindly devoted heart. "I rejoice in my errors if they turn to your glory. I see but your happiness in my fault. Forgive me if I have returned for a moment to the habitual thought of my whole life."

Cinq-Mars looked steadfastly at him; and a tear stole slowly down his cheek.

"Virtuous friend," said he, "may your fault fall only on my head! But let us hope that God, who pardons those who love, will be for us; for we are criminal, — I through love, you through friendship."

Then suddenly looking at the watch, he took the long pistol in his hand, and gazed at the smoking match with a fierce air. His long hair fell over his face like the mane of a young lion.

"Do not consume," said he; "burn slowly. Thou art about to light a flame which the waves of ocean cannot extinguish. The flame will soon light half Europe; it may perhaps reach the wood of thrones. Burn slowly, precious flame! The winds which fan thee are violent and fearful; they are love and hatred. Reserve

thyself! Thy explosion will be heard afar, and will find echoes in the peasant's hut and the king's palace. Burn, burn, poor flame! Thou art to me a sceptre and a thunderbolt!"

De Thou, still holding his ivory crucifix in his hand, said in a low voice, —

"Lord, pardon us the blood that will be shed! We combat the wicked and the impious." Then, raising his voice, "My friend, the cause of virtue will triumph," he said; "it alone will triumph. God has ordained that the guilty treaty should not reach us; that which constituted the crime is no doubt destroyed. We shall fight without the foreigners, and perhaps we shall not fight at all. God will change the heart of the king."

"'T is the hour! 't is the hour!" exclaimed Cinq-Mars, his eyes fixed upon the watch with a kind of savage joy; "four minutes more, and the Cardinalists in the camp will be crushed! We shall march upon Narbonne! He is there! Give me the pistol!"

At these words he hastily opened the tent, and took up the match.

"A courier from Paris! an express from court!" cried a voice outside, as a man, heated with hard riding and overcome with fatigue, threw himself from his horse, entered, and presented a letter to Cinq-Mars.

"From the queen, Monseigneur," he said. Cinq-Mars turned pale, and read as follows: —

M. DE CINQ-MARS, — I write this letter to entreat and conjure you to restore to her duties our well-beloved adopted daughter and friend, the Princesse Marie de Gonzaga, whom

your affection alone turns from the throne of Poland, which has been offered to her. I have sounded her heart. She is very young, and I have good reason to believe that she would accept the crown *with less effort and less grief than you may perhaps imagine.*

It is for her you have undertaken a war which will put to fire and sword my beautiful and beloved France. I supplicate and implore you to act as a gentleman, and nobly to release the Duchesse de Mantua from the promises she may have made you. Thus restore repose to her soul, and peace to our beloved country.

The queen, who will throw herself at your feet if need be,

ANNE.

Cinq-Mars calmly replaced the pistol upon the table; his first impulse had been to turn its muzzle upon himself. However, he laid it down, and snatching a pencil, wrote on the back of the letter:—

MADAME, — Marie de Gonzaga, being my wife, cannot be Queen of Poland until after my death; I die.

CINQ-MARS.

Then, as if he would not allow himself time for a moment's reflection, he forced the letter into the hands of the courier.

"To horse! to horse!" cried he, in a furious tone. "If you remain another instant, you are a dead man!"

He saw him gallop off, and re-entered the tent. Alone with his friend, he remained an instant standing, but pale, his eyes fixed, and looking on the ground like a madman. He felt himself totter.

"De Thou!" he cried.

"What would you, my friend, my dear friend? I am with you. You have acted grandly, most grandly, sublimely!"

"De Thou!" he cried again in a hollow voice, and fell with his face to the ground like an uprooted tree.

Violent tempests assume different aspects, according to the climates in which they take place. Those which have spread over a terrible space in northern countries assemble into one single cloud under the torrid zone,—the more formidable, that they leave the horizon in all its purity, and that the furious waves still reflect the azure of heaven while tinged with the blood of man. It is the same with great passions. They assume strange aspects according to our characters; but how terrible are they in vigorous hearts, which have preserved their force under the veil of social forms? When youth and despair embrace, we know not to what fury they may rise, or what may be their sudden resignation; we know not whether the volcano will burst the mountain or become suddenly extinguished within its entrails.

De Thou, in alarm, raised his friend. The blood gushed from his nostrils and ears; he would have thought him dead, but for the torrents of tears which flowed from his eyes. They were the only sign of life. Suddenly he opened his lids, looked around him, and by an extraordinary energy resumed his senses and the power of his will.

"I am in the presence of men," said he; "I must finish with them. My friend, it is half-past eleven; the hour for the signal has passed. Give, in my name, the

order to return to quarters. It was a false alarm, which I will myself explain this evening."

De Thou had already perceived the importance of this order; he went out and returned immediately. He found Cinq-Mars seated, calm, and endeavoring to cleanse the blood from his face.

"De Thou," said he, looking fixedly at him, "retire; you disturb me."

"I leave you not," answered the latter.

"Fly, I tell you! the Pyrenees are not far distant. I cannot speak much longer, even to you; but if you remain with me, you will die. I give you warning."

"I remain," repeated De Thou.

"May God preserve you, then!" answered Cinq-Mars, "for I can do nothing more; the moment has passed. I leave you here. Call Fontrailles and all the confederates; distribute these passports among them. Let them fly immediately; tell them all has failed, but that I thank them. For you, once again I say, fly with them, I entreat you; but whatever you do, follow me not,—follow me not, for your life! I swear to you not to do violence to myself!"

With these words, shaking his friend's hand without looking at him, he rushed from the tent.

Meantime, some leagues thence another conversation was taking place. At Narbonne, in the same cabinet in which we formerly beheld Richelieu regulating with Joseph the interests of the State, were still seated the same men, nearly as we have described them. The minister, however, had grown much older in three years of suffering; and the Capuchin was as much

terrified with the result of his expedition as his master appeared tranquil.

The cardinal, seated in his armchair, his legs bound and encased with furs and warm clothing, had upon his knees three kittens, which gambolled upon his scarlet robe. Every now and then he took one of them and placed it upon the others, to continue their sport. He smiled as he watched them. On his feet lay their mother, looking like an enormous animated muff.

Joseph, seated near him, was going over the account of all he had heard in the confessional. Pale even now, at the danger he had run of being discovered, or of being murdered by Jacques, he concluded thus, —

"In short, your Eminence, I cannot help feeling agitated to my heart's core when I reflect upon the dangers which have, and still do, threaten you. Assassins offer themselves to poniard you. I behold in France the whole court against you, one half of the army, and two provinces. Abroad, Spain and Portugal are ready to furnish troops. Everywhere there are snares or battles, poniards or cannon."

The cardinal yawned three times, without discontinuing his amusement, and then said, —

"A cat is a very fine animal. It is a drawing-room tiger. What suppleness, what extraordinary finesse! Here is this little yellow one pretending to sleep, in order that the tortoise-shell one may not notice it, but fall upon its brother; and this one, how it tears the other! See how it sticks its claws into its side! It would kill and eat it, I fully believe, if it were the stronger. It is very amusing. What pretty animals!"

He coughed and sneezed for some time; then he continued, —

"Messire Joseph, I sent word to you not to speak to me of business until after my supper. I have an appetite now, and it is not yet my hour. Chicot, my doctor, recommends regularity, and I feel my usual pain in my side. This is how I shall spend the evening," he added, looking at the clock. "At nine, we will settle the affairs of M. le Grand. At ten, I shall be carried round the garden to take the air by moonlight. Then I shall sleep for an hour or two. At midnight the king will be here; and at four o'clock you may return to receive the various orders for arrests, condemnations, or any others I may have to give you, for the provinces, Paris, or the armies of his Majesty."

Richelieu said all this in the same tone of voice, with a uniform enunciation, affected only by the weakness of his chest, and the loss of several teeth.

It was seven in the evening. The Capuchin withdrew. The cardinal supped with the greatest tranquillity; and when the clock struck half-past eight, he sent for Joseph, and said to him, when he was seated, —

"This, then, is all they have been able to do against me during more than two years. They are poor creatures, truly! The Duc de Bouillon, whom I thought possessed some ability, has forfeited all claim to my opinion. I have watched him closely; and I ask you, has he taken one step worthy of a true statesman? The king, Monsieur, and the rest, have only shown their teeth against me, and without depriving me of one single man. The young Cinq-Mars is the only man among

them who has any consecutiveness of ideas. All that he has done has been done surprisingly well. I must do him justice; he had good qualities. I should have made him my pupil, had it not been for his obstinate character. But he has here charged me *à l'outrance*, and must take the consequences. I am sorry for him. I have left them to float about in open water for the last two years. I shall now draw the net."

"It is time, Monseigneur," said Joseph, who often trembled involuntarily as he spoke. "Do you bear in mind that from Perpignan to Narbonne the way is short? Do you know that if your army here is powerful, your own troops are weak and uncertain; that the young nobles are furious; and that the king is not sure?"

The cardinal looked at the clock.

"It is only half-past eight, Joseph. I have already told you that I will not talk about this affair until nine. Meantime, as justice must be done, you will write what I shall dictate, for my memory serves me well. There are still some objectionable persons left, I see by my notes, — four of the judges of Urbain Grandier. He was a rare genius, that Urbain Grandier," he added, with a malicious expression. Joseph bit his lips. "All the other judges have died miserably. As to Houmain, he shall be hanged as a smuggler by-and-by. We may leave him alone for the present. But there is that horrible Lactantius, who lives peacefully, Barré, and Mignon. Take a pen, and write to the Bishop of Poitiers, —

"MONSEIGNEUR, — It is his Majesty's pleasure that Fathers Mignon and Barré be superseded in their cures, and sent

with the shortest possible delay to the town of Lyons, with Father Lactantius, Capuchin, to be tried before a special tribunal, charged with criminal intentions against the State."

Joseph wrote as coolly as a Turk strikes off a head at a sign from his master. The cardinal said to him, while signing the letter, —

"I will let you know how I wish them to disappear, for it is important to efface all traces of that affair. Providence has served me well. In removing these men, I complete its work. That is all that posterity shall know of the affair."

And he read to the Capuchin that page of his memoirs in which he recounts the possession and sorceries of the magician.[1] During this slow process, Joseph could not help looking at the clock.

"You are anxious to come to M. le Grand," said the cardinal at last. "Well, then, to please you, let us begin.

"Do you think I have not my reasons for being tranquil? You think that I have allowed these poor conspirators to go too far. No, no! Here are some little papers that would reassure you, did you know their contents. First, in this hollow stick is the treaty with Spain, seized at Oleron. I am well satisfied with Laubardemont; he is an able man."

The fire of ferocious jealousy sparkled under the thick eyebrows of the monk.

"Ah, Monseigneur," said he, "you know not from whom he seized it. He certainly suffered him to die,

[1] Collect. des Mémoires, xxviii. 189.

and in that respect we cannot complain, for he was the agent of the conspiracy; but it was his son."

"Say you the truth?" cried the cardinal, in a severe tone. "Yes, for you dare not lie to me. How knew you this?"

"From his attendants, Monseigneur. Here are their reports. They will testify to them."

The cardinal having examined these papers, said, —

"We will employ him once more to try our conspirators, and then you shall do as you like with him. I give him to you."

Joseph joyfully pocketed his precious denunciations, and continued, —

"Your Eminence speaks of trying men who are still armed and on horseback."

"They are not all so. Read this letter from Monsieur to Chavigny. He asks for pardon. He dared not address me the first day, and his prayers rose no higher than the knees of one of my servants.[1]

"But the next day he took courage, and sent this to myself,[2] and the third to the king. His project choked

[1] *To M. de Chavigny.*

M. DE CHAVIGNY, — Although I believe that you are little satisfied with me (and in truth you have reason to be dissatisfied), I do not the less entreat you to endeavor my reconciliation with his Eminence, and rely for this upon the true love you bear me, and which, I believe, is greater than your anger. You know how much I require to be relieved from the danger I am in. You have already twice stood my friend with his Eminence. I swear to you this shall be the last time I give you such an employment. GASTON D'ORLÉANS.

[2] *To his Excellency the Cardinal-Duc.*

MY COUSIN, — This ungrateful M. le Grand is the most guilty man in the world to have displeased you. The favors he received from his

him; he could not keep it down. But I am not so easily satisfied. I must have a free and full confession, or I will expel him from the kingdom. I have written to him this morning.[1] As to the magnificent and powerful Duc de Bouillon, sovereign lord of Sedan and general-in-chief of the armies in Italy, he has just been arrested by his officers in the midst of his soldiers, concealed in a truss of straw. There remain, therefore, only our two young neighbors. They imagine they have the camp wholly at their orders, while they really have only the red troops. All the rest, being Monsieur's men, will not act, and my troops will arrest them. However, I have permitted them to appear to obey. If they give the signal at half-past eleven, they will be arrested at the first step. If not, the king will give them up to me this evening. Do not open your eyes so wide. He will give them up to me, I repeat, this night, between midnight and one o'clock. You see that all has been done without you, Joseph. We can dispense with you very well; and truly, all this time, I do not see that we

Majesty have always made me doubtful of him and his artifices. For you, my cousin, I retain my whole esteem. I am truly repentant at having again been wanting in the fidelity I owe to my Lord the King, and I call God to witness the sincerity with which I shall be for the rest of my life your most faithful friend, with the same devotion that I am, my cousin, your affectionate cousin, GASTON.

[1] *The Cardinal's Answer.*

MONSIEUR, — Since God wills that men should have recourse to a frank and entire confession to be absolved of their faults in this world, I indicate to you the steps you must take to be delivered from this danger. Your Highness has commenced well; you must continue. This is all I can say to you.

have received any great service from you. You grow negligent."

"Ah, Monseigneur! did you but know the trouble I have had to discover the route of the bearers of the treaty! I only learned it by risking my life between these young people."

The cardinal laughed contemptuously, leaning back in his chair.

"Thou must have been very ridiculous and very fearful in that box, Joseph; I dare say it was the first time in thy life thou ever heardst love spoken of. Dost thou like the language, Father Joseph? Tell me, dost thou clearly understand it? I doubt whether thou hast formed a very refined idea of it."

Richelieu, his arms crossed, looked at his discomfited Capuchin with infinite delight, and continued in the scornfully familiar tone of a grand seigneur, which he sometimes assumed, pleasing himself with putting forth the noblest expressions through the most impure lips:—

"Come, now, Joseph, give me a definition of love according to thy idea. What can it be? for thou seest it exists out of romances; this worthy youngster undertook these little conspiracies through love. Thou heardst it thyself with thine unworthy ears. Come, what is love? for my part, I know nothing about it."

The monk was astounded, and looked upon the ground with the stupid eye of some base animal. After long consideration, he replied in a drawling and nasal voice:

"It must be a kind of malignant fever which leads the brain astray; but in truth, Monseigneur, I have

never reflected on it until this moment. I have always been embarrassed in speaking to a woman. I wish women could be omitted from society altogether; for I do not see what use they are, unless it be to disclose secrets, like the little duchesse or Marion de Lorme, whom I cannot too strongly recommend to your Eminence. She thought of everything, and herself threw our little prophecy among the conspirators with great address. We have not been without the *marvellous* this time. As in the siege of Hesdin, all we have to do is to find *a window through which you may pass on the day of the execution.*" [1]

"This is another of your absurdities, sir," said the cardinal; "you will make me as ridiculous as yourself, if you go on so; I am too powerful to need the assistance of Heaven. Do not let that happen again. Occupy yourself only with the people I consign to you. I traced your part before. When the master of the horse is taken, you will see him tried and executed at Lyons. I will not be known in this. This affair is beneath me; it is a stone under my feet, upon which I ought not to have bestowed so much attention."

Joseph was silent; he could not understand this man, who, surrounded on every side by armed enemies, spoke of the future as of a present over which he had the entire control, and of the present as a past which he no longer feared. He knew not whether to look upon him

[1] In 1638, Prince Thomas having raised the siege of Hesdin, the cardinal was much vexed at it. A nun of the convent of Mount Calvary had said that the victory would be to the king and Father Joseph, thus wishing it to be believed that Heaven protected the minister. — *Mémoires pour l'histoire du Cardinal de Richelieu.*

as a madman or a prophet, above or below the standard of human nature.

His astonishment was redoubled when Chavigny hastily entered, and nearly falling, in his heavy boots, over the cardinal's footstool, exclaimed in great agitation,—

"Sir, one of your servants has just arrived from Perpignan; and he has beheld the camp in an uproar, and your enemies in the saddle."

"They will soon dismount, sir," replied Richelieu, replacing his footstool. "You appear to have lost your equanimity."

"But — but, Monseigneur, must we not warn M. de Fabert?"

"Let him sleep, and go to bed yourself; and you also, Joseph."

"Monseigneur, another strange event has occurred, — the king has arrived."

"Indeed! that is extraordinary," said the minister, looking at his watch. "I did not expect him these two hours. Retire, both of you."

A heavy trampling and the clattering of arms announced the arrival of the prince; the folding-doors were thrown open; the guards in the cardinal's service struck the ground thrice with their pikes; and the king appeared.

He entered, supporting himself with a cane on one side, and on the other leaning upon the shoulder of his confessor, Father Sirmond, who withdrew, and left him with the cardinal; the latter rose with difficulty, but could not advance a step to meet the king, because his legs were bandaged and enveloped. He made a sign

that they should assist the king to a seat near the fire, facing himself. Louis XIII. fell into an armchair furnished with pillows, asked for and drank a glass of cordial, prepared to strengthen him against the frequent fainting-fits caused by his malady of languor, signed to all to leave the room, and, alone with Richelieu, he said in a languid voice, —

"I am departing, my dear cardinal; I feel that I shall soon return to God. I become weaker from day to day; neither the summer nor the southern air has restored my strength."

"I shall precede your Majesty," replied the minister. "You see that death has already conquered my limbs; but while I have a head to think and a hand to write, I shall be at the service of your Majesty."

"And I am sure it was your intention to add, 'a heart to love me.'"

"Can your Majesty doubt it?" answered the cardinal, frowning, and biting his lips impatiently at this speech.

"Sometimes I doubt it," replied the prince. "Listen: I wish to speak openly to you, and to complain of you to yourself. There are two things which have been upon my conscience these three years. I have never mentioned them to you; but I reproached you secretly, and could anything have induced me to consent to any proposals contrary to your interest, it would be this recollection."

There was in this speech that frankness natural to weak minds, who seek by thus making their ruler uneasy, to compensate for the harm they dare not do him, and revenge their subjection by a childish controversy.

Richelieu perceived by these words that he had run a great risk; but he saw at the same time the necessity of venting all his spleen, and to facilitate the explosion of these important avowals, he accumulated all the professions he thought most calculated to provoke the king.

"No, no!" his Majesty at length exclaimed, "I shall believe nothing until you have explained those two things, which are always in my thoughts, which were lately mentioned to me, and which I can justify by no reasoning. I mean the trial of Urbain Grandier, of which I was never well informed, and the reason for the hatred you bore to my unfortunate mother, even to her very ashes."

"Is this all, Sire?" said Richelieu. "Are these my only faults? They are easily explained. The first it was necessary to conceal from your Majesty because of its horrible and disgusting details of scandal. There was certainly an art employed which cannot be looked upon as guilty, in concealing under the title of 'magic' crimes, the very names of which are revolting to modesty, the recital of which would have revealed dangerous mysteries to the innocent; this was a holy deceit practised to hide these impurities from the eyes of the people."

"Enough, enough, Cardinal," said Louis XIII., turning away his head, and looking downwards, while a blush covered his face; "I cannot hear more. I understand you; these explanations would disgust me. I approve your motives; 't is well. I had not been told that; they had concealed these dreadful vices from me. Are you assured of the proofs of these crimes?"

"I have them all in my possession, Sire; and as to the glorious queen, Marie de Médicis, I am surprised that

your Majesty can forget how much I was attached to her. Yes, I do not fear to acknowledge it; it is to her I owe my elevation. She was the first who deigned to notice the Bishop of Luçon, then only twenty-two years of age, to place me near her. What have I not suffered when she compelled me to oppose her in your Majesty's interest! But this sacrifice was made for you. I never have, and never shall, regret it."

"'T is well for you, but for me!" said the prince, bitterly.

"Ah, Sire," exclaimed the cardinal, "did not the Son of God himself set you an example? It is by the model of every perfection that we regulate our counsels; and if the monument due to the precious remains of your mother is not yet raised, Heaven is my witness that the works were retarded through the fear of afflicting your heart by bringing back the recollection of her death. But blessed be the day in which I have been permitted to speak to you on the subject! I myself shall say the first Mass at St. Denis, when we shall see her deposited there, if Providence allows me the strength."

The countenance of the king assumed a more affable yet still cold expression; and the cardinal, thinking that he could go no farther that evening in persuasion, suddenly resolved to make a more powerful move, and to attack the enemy in front. Still keeping his eyes firmly fixed upon the king, he said coldly, —

"And was it for this you consented to my death?"

"Me!" said the king. "You have been deceived; I have indeed heard of a conspiracy, and I wished to

speak to you about it; but I have commanded nothing against you."

"The conspirators do not say so, Sire; but I am bound to believe your Majesty, and I am glad for your sake that men were deceived. But what advice were you about to condescend to give me?"

"I — I wished to tell you frankly, and between ourselves, that you will do well to beware of Monsieur —"

"Ah, Sire, I cannot now heed it; for here is a letter which he has just sent to me for you. He seems to have been guilty even towards your Majesty."

The king read in astonishment: —

MONSEIGNEUR, — I am much grieved at having once more failed in the fidelity which I owe to your Majesty. I humbly entreat you to allow me to ask a thousand pardons, with the assurances of my submission and repentance.

Your very humble servant,

GASTON.

"What does this mean?" cried Louis; "dare they arm against me also?"

"*Also!*" muttered the cardinal, biting his lips; "yes, Sire, also; and this makes me believe, to a certain degree, this little packet of papers."

While speaking, he drew a roll of parchment from a piece of hollowed elder, and opened it before the eyes of the king.

"This is simply a treaty with Spain, which I think does not bear the signature of your Majesty. You may see the twenty articles all in due form. Everything is here arranged, — the place of safety, the number of troops, the supplies of men and money."

"The traitors!" cried the king, in great agitation; "they must be seized. My brother renounces them and repents; but do not fail to arrest the Duc de Bouillon."

"It shall be done, Sire."

"That will be difficult, in the middle of the army in Italy."

"I will answer with my head for his arrest, Sire; but is there not another name to be added?"

"Who — what — Cinq-Mars?" inquired the king, hesitating.

"Exactly so, Sire," answered the cardinal.

"I see — but — I think — we might — "

"Hear me!" exclaimed Richelieu, in a voice of thunder; "all must be settled to-day. Your favorite is mounted at the head of his party; choose between him and me. Yield up the boy to the man, or the man to the boy; there is no alternative."

"And what will you do if I consent?" said the king.

"I will have his head and that of his friend."

"Never! it is impossible!" replied the king, with horror, as he relapsed into the same state of irresolution he evinced when with Cinq-Mars against Richelieu. "He is my friend as well as you; my heart bleeds at the idea of his death. Why can you not both agree? Why this division? It is that which has led him to this. You have between you brought me to the brink of despair; you have made me the most miserable of men."

Louis hid his head in his hands while speaking, and perhaps he shed tears; but the inflexible minister kept his eyes upon him as if watching his prey, and without

remorse, without giving the king time for reflection, — on the contrary, profiting by this emotion to speak yet longer.

"And is it thus," he continued in a harsh and cold voice, "that you remember the commandments of God communicated to you by the mouth of your confessor? You told me one day that the Church expressly commanded you to reveal to your prime minister all that you might hear against him; yet I have never heard from you of my intended death! It was necessary that more faithful friends should apprise me of this conspiracy; that the guilty themselves through the mercy of Providence should themselves make the avowal of their fault. One only, the most guilty, yet the least of all, still resists, and it is he who has conducted the whole; it is he who would deliver France into the power of the foreigner, who would overthrow in one single day my labors of twenty years. He would call up the Huguenots of the south, invite to arms all orders of the State, revive crushed pretensions, and, in fact, renew the League which was put down by your father. It is that, — do not deceive yourself, — it is that which raises so many heads against you. Are you prepared for the combat? If so, where are your arms?"

The king, quite overwhelmed, made no reply; he still covered his face with his hands. The stony-hearted cardinal crossed his arms and continued, —

"I fear that you imagine it is for myself I speak. Do you really think that I do not know my own powers, and that I fear such an adversary? Really, I know not what prevents me from letting you act for

yourself, — from transferring the immense burden of State affairs to the shoulders of this youth. You may imagine that since the twenty years I have been acquainted with your court, I have not forgotten to assure myself a retreat where, in spite of you, I could now go to live the six months which perhaps remain to me of life. It would be a curious employment for me to watch the progress of such a reign. What answer would you return, for instance, when all the inferior potentates, regaining their station, no longer kept in subjection by me, shall come in your brother's name to say to you, as they dared to say to Henri IV. on his throne: 'Divide with us all the hereditary governments and sovereignties, and we shall be content.'[1] You will doubtless accede to their request; and it is the least you can do for those who will have delivered you from Richelieu. It will, perhaps, be fortunate, for to govern the Ile de France, which they will no doubt allow you as the original domain, your new minister will not require many secretaries."

While speaking thus, he furiously pushed the huge table, which nearly filled the room, and was laden with papers and numerous portfolios.

Louis was aroused from his apathetic meditation by the excessive audacity of this discourse. He raised his head, and seemed to have instantly formed one resolution for fear he should adopt another.

"Well, sir," said he, "my answer is that I will reign alone."

"Be it so!" replied Richelieu. "But I ought to give

[1] Mémoires de Sully, 1595.

you notice that affairs are at present somewhat complicated. This is the hour when I generally commence my ordinary avocations."

"I will act in your place," said Louis. "I will open the portfolios and issue my commands."

"Try, then," said Richelieu. "I shall retire; and if anything causes you to hesitate, you can send for me."

He rang a bell. In the same instant, and as if they had awaited the signal, four vigorous footmen entered, and carried him and his chair into another apartment, for we have before remarked that he was unable to walk. While passing through the chambers where the secretaries were at work, he called out in a loud voice, —

"You will receive his Majesty's commands."

The king remained alone, strong in his new resolution, and proud in having once resisted, he became anxious immediately to plunge into political business. He walked round the immense table, and beheld as many portfolios as they then counted empires, kingdoms, and States in Europe. He opened one and found it divided into sections equalling in number the subdivisions of the country to which it related. All was in order, but in alarming order for him, because each note only referred to the very essence of the business it alluded to, and related only to the exact point of its then relations with France. These laconic notes proved as enigmas to Louis, as did the letters in cipher which covered the table. Here all was confusion. An edict of banishment and expropriation of the Huguenots of La Rochelle

was mingled with treaties with Gustavus Adolphus and the Huguenots of the north against the empire. Notes on General Bannier and Wallenstein, the Duc de Weimar, and Jean de Witt, were pell-mell with extracts of letters taken from the casket of the queen, the list of the necklaces and jewels they contained, and the double interpretation which might be put upon every phrase of her notes. Upon the margin of one of these letters was written: "For four lines in a man's handwriting he might be criminally tried." Farther on were scattered denunciations against the Huguenots; the republican plans they had drawn up; the division of France into departments under the annual dictatorship of a chief. The seal of this projected State was affixed to it, representing an angel leaning upon a cross, and holding in his hand a Bible, which he raised to his forehead. By the side was a document which contained a list of those cardinals the pope had selected the same day as the Bishop of Luçon (Richelieu). Among them was to be found the Marquis de Bédemar, ambassador and conspirator at Venice.

Louis XIII. exhausted his powers in vain over the details of another period, seeking unsuccessfully for any documents which might allude to the present conspiracy, to enable him to perceive its true knot, and all that had been attempted against him, when a diminutive man, of an olive complexion, who stooped much, entered the cabinet with a measured step. This was a secretary of State named Desnoyers. He advanced, bowing.

"May I be permitted to address your Majesty on the affairs of Portugal?" said he.

"And consequently of Spain?" said Louis. "Portugal is a province of Spain."

"Of Portugal," reiterated Desnoyers. "Here is the manifesto we have this moment received." And he read, "Don John, by the grace of God, King of Portugal and of Algarves, kingdoms on this side of Africa, lord over Guinea, by conquest, navigation, and trade with Arabia, Persia, and the Indies —"

"What is all that?" said the king. "Who talks in this manner?"

"The Duke of Braganza, King of Portugal, crowned already some time by a man whom they call Pinto. Scarcely has he ascended the throne than he offers assistance to the revolted Catalonians."

"Has Catalonia also revolted? The king, Philip IV., no longer has the count-duke for his prime minister?"

"Just the contrary, Sire. It is on this very account. Here is the declaration of the states-general of Catalonia to his Catholic Majesty, signifying that the whole country will take up arms against his *sacrilegious* and *excommunicated* troops. The King of Portugal —"

"Say the Duke of Braganza!" replied Louis. "I recognize no rebels."

"The Duke of Braganza, then," coldly repeated the secretary of State, "sends his nephew, Don Ignaçio de Mascarenas, to the principality of Catalonia, to seize the protection (and it may be the sovereignty) of that country, which he would add to that he has just reconquered. Your Majesty's troops are before Perpignan —"

"Well, and what of that?" said Louis.

"The Catalonians are more disposed towards France than towards Portugal, and there is still time to deprive the King of — the Duke of Portugal, I should say, of this protectorship."

"What! I assist rebels! You dare —"

"Such was the intention of his Eminence," continued the secretary of State. "Spain and France are nearly at open war, and M. d'Olivarès has not hesitated to offer the assistance of his Catholic Majesty to the Huguenots."

"Very good. I will consider it," said the king. "Leave me."

"Sire, the states-general of Catalonia are in a dilemma. The troops from Aragon march against them."

"We shall see. I will come to a decision in a quarter of an hour," answered Louis XIII.

The little secretary of State left the apartment discontented and discouraged. In his place Chavigny immediately appeared, holding a portfolio, on which were emblazoned the arms of England. "Sire," said he, "I have to request your Majesty's commands upon the affairs of England. The Parliamentarians, commanded by the Earl of Essex, have raised the siege of Gloucester. Prince Rupert has at Newbury fought a disastrous battle, and of little profit to his Britannic Majesty. The Parliament is prolonged. All the principal cities take part with it, together with all the seaports and the Presbyterian population. King Charles I. implores assistance, which the queen can no longer obtain from Holland."

"Troops must be sent to my brother of England,"

said Louis; but he wanted to look over the preceding papers, and casting his eyes over the notes of the cardinal, he found that under a former request of the King of England he had written with his own hand, —

"We must consider some time and wait. The commons are strong. King Charles reckons upon the Scots; they will sell him.

"We must be cautious. A warlike man has been over to see Vincennes, and he has said that 'princes ought never to be struck, except on the head.'"

The cardinal had added "remarkable," but he had erased this word and substituted "formidable." Again, beneath, —

"This man rules Fairfax. He plays an inspired part. He will be a great man — assistance refused — money lost."

The king then said, "No, no! do nothing hastily. I shall wait."

"But, Sire," said Chavigny, "events pass rapidly. If the courier be delayed, the king's destruction may happen a year sooner."

"Have they advanced so far?" asked Louis.

"In the camp of the Independents they preach up the republic with the Bible in their hands. In that of the Royalists, they dispute for precedency, and amuse themselves."

"But one turn of good fortune may save everything?"

"The Stuarts are not fortunate, Sire," answered Chavigny, respectfully, but in a tone which left ample room for consideration.

"Leave me," said the king, with some displeasure.

The State secretary slowly retired.

It was then that Louis XIII. beheld himself as he really was, and was terrified at the nothingness he found in himself. He at first stared at the mass of papers which surrounded him, passing from one to the other, finding dangers on every side, and finding them still greater with the remedies he invented. He rose; and changing his place, he bent over, or rather threw himself upon, a geographical map of Europe. There he found all his fears concentrated. In the north, the south, the very centre of the kingdom, revolutions appeared to him like so many Euménides. In every country he thought he saw a volcano ready to burst forth. He imagined he heard cries of distress from kings, who appealed to him for help, and the furious shouts of the populace. He fancied he felt the territory of France trembling and crumbling beneath his feet. His feeble and fatigued sight failed him. His weak head was attacked by vertigo, which threw all his blood back upon his heart.

"Richelieu!" he cried in a stifled voice, while he rang a bell; "summon the cardinal immediately."

And he swooned in an armchair.

When the king opened his eyes, revived by salts and potent essences which had been applied to his lips and temples, he for one instant beheld himself surrounded by pages, who withdrew as soon as he opened his eyes, and he was once more left alone with the cardinal. The impassible minister had had his chair placed by that of the king, as a physician would seat himself by the bedside of his patient, and fixed his sparkling and scrutinizing eyes upon the pale countenance of Louis. As soon

as his victim could hear him, he renewed his fearful discourse in a hollow voice, —

"You have recalled me. What would you with me?"

Louis, who was reclining on the pillow, half opened his eyes, fixed them upon Richelieu, and hastily closed them again. That bony head, armed with two flaming eyes, and terminating in a pointed and grizzly beard, the cap and vestments of the color of blood and flames, — all appeared to him like an infernal spirit.

"You must reign," he said in a languid voice.

"But will you give me up Cinq-Mars and De Thou?" again urged the implacable minister, bending forward to read in the dull eyes of the prince, as an avaricious heir follows up, even to the tomb, the last glimpses of the will of a dying relative.

"You must reign," repeated the king, turning away his head.

"Sign then," said Richelieu; "the contents of this are, 'This is my command, — to take them, dead or alive.'"

Louis, whose head still reclined on the raised back of the chair, suffered his hand to fall upon the fatal paper, and signed it. "For pity's sake, leave me; I am dying!" he said.

"That is not yet all," continued he whom men call the great politician. "I place no reliance on you; I must first have some guarantee and assurance. Sign this paper, and I will leave you: —

"When the king shall go to visit the cardinal, the guards of the latter shall remain under arms; and when the cardinal shall visit the king, the guards of the cardinal shall share the same post with those of his Majesty.

"Again: —

"His Majesty undertakes to place the two princes, his sons, in the cardinal's hands, as hostages of the good faith of his attachment."[1]

"My children!" exclaimed Louis, raising his head, "dare you?"

"Would you rather that I should retire?" said Richelieu.

The king again signed.

"Is all finished now?" he inquired with a deep sigh.

All was not finished; one other grief was still in reserve for him. The door was suddenly opened, and Cinq-Mars entered. It was the cardinal who trembled now.

"What would you here, sir?" said he, seizing the bell to ring for assistance.

The master of the horse was as pale as the king, and without condescending to answer Richelieu, he advanced steadily towards Louis XIII., who looked at him with the air of a man who has just received a sentence of death.

"You would, Sire, find it difficult to have me arrested, for I have twenty thousand men under my command," said Henri d'Effiat, in a sweet and subdued voice.

"Alas, Cinq-Mars!" replied the king, sadly; "is it thou who hast been guilty of these crimes?"

"Yes, Sire; and I also bring you my sword, for no doubt you came here to surrender me," said he, unbuckling his sword, and laying it at the feet of the king, who fixed his eyes upon the floor without making any reply.

Cinq-Mars smiled sadly, but not bitterly, for he no longer belonged to this earth. Then looking contemptu-

[1] Mémoires d'Anne d'Autriche, 1642.

ously at Richelieu, "I surrender because I wish to die, but I am not conquered."

The cardinal clinched his fist with passion; but he restrained his fury. "Who are your accomplices?" he demanded. Cinq-Mars looked steadfastly at Louis, and half opened his lips to speak. The king bent down his head, and felt at that moment a torture unknown to all other men.

"I have none," said Cinq-Mars, pitying the king; and he slowly left the apartment. He stopped in the first gallery. Fabert and all the gentlemen rose on seeing him. He walked up to the commander, and said, —

"Sir, order these gentlemen to arrest me!"

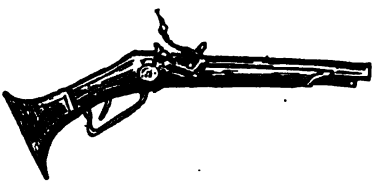
They looked at each other, without daring to approach him.

"Yes, sir, I am your prisoner; yes, gentlemen, I am without my sword, and I repeat to you that I am the king's prisoner."

"I do not understand what I see," said the general; "there are two of you who surrender, and I have no instruction to arrest any one."

"Two!" said Cinq-Mars; "the other is doubtless De Thou. Alas! I recognize him by this devotion."

"And had I not also guessed your intention?" exclaimed the latter, coming forward, and throwing himself into his arms.



CHAPTER XXV.

THE PRISONERS.

J'ai trouvé dans mon cœur le dessein de mon frère.
PICHALD, *Léonidas.*

Mourir! sans vider mon carquois!
Sans percer, sans fouler, sans pétrir dans leur fange
Ces bourreaux barbouilleurs de lois!
ANDRÉ CHÉNIER.

AMONG those old châteaux of which France is every year deprived regretfully, as of flowers from her crown, there was one of a grim and savage appearance upon the left bank of the Saône. It looked like a formidable sentinel placed at one of the gates of Lyons, and derived its name from an enormous rock, known as Pierre-Encise, which terminates in a peak, — a sort of natural pyramid, the summit of which overhanging the river in former times, they say, joined the rocks which may still be seen on the opposite bank, forming the natural arch of a bridge; but time, the waters, and the hand of man, have left nothing standing but the ancient mass of granite which formed the pedestal of the now destroyed fortress.

The archbishops of Lyons, as the temporal lords of the city, had built and formerly resided in this castle. It afterwards became a fortress, and during the reign of Louis XIII. a State prison. One colossal tower, where the daylight could only penetrate through three long loopholes, commanded the edifice, and some irregular buildings surrounded it with their massive walls, whose lines and angles followed the form of the immense and perpendicular rock.

It was here that the cardinal, jealous of his prey, determined to imprison his young enemies, and to conduct them himself.

Allowing Louis to precede him to Paris, he removed his captives from Narbonne, dragging them in his train to ornament his last triumph, and embarking on the Rhone at Tarascon, nearly at the mouth of the river, as if to prolong the pleasure of revenge which men have dared to call that of the gods, displayed to the eyes of the spectators on both sides of the river the luxury of his hatred; he slowly proceeded on his course up the river in barges with gilded oars, and emblazoned with his armorial bearings, reclining in the first, and followed by his two victims in the second, which was fastened to his own by a long chain.

Often in the evening, when the heat of the day was passed, the awnings of the two boats were removed, and in the one Richelieu might be seen, pale, and seated in the stern; in that which followed, the two young prisoners, calm and collected, supported each other, watching the passage of the rapid stream. Formerly the soldiers of Cæsar, who encamped on the same shores, would

have thought they beheld the inflexible boatman of the infernal regions conducting the friendly shades of Castor and Pollux. Christians dared not even reflect, or see a priest leading his two enemies to the scaffold; it was the first minister who passed.

Thus he went on his way until he left his victims under guard at the identical city in which the late conspirators had doomed him to perish. Thus loved he to defy Fate herself, and to plant a trophy on the very spot which had been selected for his tomb.

"He was borne," says an ancient manuscript journal of this year, "along the river Rhone in a boat in which a wooden chamber had been constructed, lined with crimson fluted velvet, the flooring of which was of gold. The same boat contained an antechamber decorated in the same manner. The prow and stern of the boat were occupied by soldiers and guards, wearing scarlet coats embroidered with gold, silver, and silk; and many lords of note. His Eminence occupied a bed hung with purple taffetas. Monseigneur the Cardinal Bigni, and Messeigneurs the Bishops of Nantes and Chartres, were there, with many abbés and gentlemen in other boats. Preceding his vessel, a boat sounded the passages, and another boat followed, filled with arquebusiers and officers to command them. When they approached any isle, they sent soldiers to inspect it, to discover whether it was occupied by any suspicious persons; and not meeting any, they guarded the shore until two boats which followed had passed. They were filled with the nobility and well-armed soldiers.

"Afterwards came the boat of his Eminence, to the stern of which was attached a little boat, which conveyed MM. de Thou and Cinq-Mars, guarded by an officer of the king's guard and twelve guards from the regiment of his Emi-

nence. Three vessels, containing the clothes and plate of his Eminence, with several gentlemen and soldiers, followed the boats.

"Two companies of light-horsemen followed the banks of the Rhone in Dauphiné, and as many on the Languedoc and Vivarais side, and a noble regiment of foot, who preceded his Eminence in the towns which he was to enter, or in which he was to sleep. It was pleasant to listen to the trumpets, which, played in Dauphiné, were answered by those in Vivarais, and repeated by the echoes of our rocks. It seemed as if all were trying which could play best." [1]

In the middle of a night of the month of September, while everything appeared to slumber in the impregnable tower which contained the prisoners, the door of their outer chamber turned noiselessly on its hinges, and a man appeared on the threshold, clad in a brown robe confined round his waist by a cord. His feet were encased in sandals, and his hand grasped a large bunch of keys; it was Joseph. He looked cautiously round without advancing, and contemplated in silence the apartment occupied by the master of the horse. Thick carpets covered the floor, and large and splendid hangings concealed the walls of the prison; a bed hung with red damask was prepared, but it was unoccupied. Seated near a high chimney in a large armchair, attired in a long gray robe similar in form to that of a priest, his head bent down, and his eyes fixed upon a little cross of gold by the flickering light of a lamp, he was absorbed in so deep a meditation that the Capuchin had leisure to approach him closely, and confront the prisoner before he perceived him. Suddenly, however,

[1] See Notes and Illustrations.

Cinq-Mars raised his head and exclaimed, "Wretch, what do you here?"

"Young man, you are violent," answered the mysterious intruder, in a low voice. "Two months' imprisonment ought to have been enough to calm you. I come to tell you things of great importance. Listen to me! I have thought much of you; and I do not hate you so much as you imagine. The moments are precious. I will tell you all in a few words: in two hours you will be interrogated, tried, and condemned to death with your friend. It cannot be otherwise, for all will be finished the same day."

"I know it," answered Cinq-Mars; "and I am prepared."

"Well, then, I can still release you from this affair. I have reflected deeply, as I told you; and I am here to make a proposal which can but give you satisfaction. The cardinal has but six months to live. Let us not be mysterious; we must speak openly. You see where I have brought you to serve him; and you can judge by that the point to which I would conduct him to serve you. If you wish it, we can cut short the six months of his life which still remain. The king loves you, and will recall you with joy when he finds you still live. You are, you may long live, powerful and happy; you will protect me, and make me cardinal."

Astonishment deprived the young prisoner of speech. He could not understand such language, and seemed to be unable to descend to it from his higher meditations. All that he could say was,—

"Your benefactor, Richelieu?"

The Capuchin smiled, and drawing nearer, continued in an undertone, —

"Policy admits of no benefits; it contains nothing but interest. A man employed by a minister is no more bound to be grateful than a horse whose rider prefers him to others. My pace has been convenient to him; so much the better. Now it is my interest to throw him from the saddle. Yes, this man loves none but himself. I now see that he has deceived me by continually retarding my elevation; but once again, I possess the sure means for your escape in silence. I am the master here. I will remove the men in whom he trusts, and replace them by others whom he has condemned to die, and who are near at hand confined in the northern tower, — the Tour des Oubliettes, which overhangs the river. His creatures shall occupy their places. I will recommend a physician — an empyric who is devoted to me — to the illustrious cardinal, who has been given over by the most scientific in Paris. If you will unite with me, he shall convey to him a universal and eternal remedy."

"Away!" exclaimed Cinq-Mars. "Leave me, thou infernal monk! No, thou art like no other man! Thou glidest with a noiseless and furtive step through the darkness; thou traversest the walls to preside at secret crimes; thou placest thyself between the hearts of lovers to separate them eternally. Who art thou? Thou resemblest a tormented spirit of the damned!"

"Romantic boy!" answered Joseph; "you would have possessed high attainments had it not been for your

false notions. There is perhaps neither damnation nor soul. If the dead returned to complain of their fate, I should have a thousand around me; and I have never seen any even in my dreams."

"Monster!" muttered Cinq-Mars.

"Words again!" said Joseph; "there is neither monster nor virtuous man. You and De Thou, who pride yourselves on what you call virtue,—you have failed in causing the death of perhaps a hundred thousand men —at once and in the broad daylight—for no end, while Richelieu and I have caused the death of far fewer, one by one, and by night, to found a great power. Would you remain pure and virtuous, you must not interfere with other men; or rather, it is more reasonable to see that which is, and to say with me, it is possible that there is no such thing as a soul. We are the sons of chance; but relative to other men, we have passions which we must satisfy."

"I breathe again!" exclaimed Cinq-Mars; "he believes not in God!"

Joseph continued,—

"Richelieu, you, and I were born ambitious; it followed, then, that everything must be sacrificed to this idea."

"Wretched man, do not compare me to thyself!"

"It is the plain truth, nevertheless," replied the Capuchin; "only you now see that our system was better than yours."

"Miserable wretch, it was for love—"

"No, no! it was not that; here are mere words again. You have perhaps imagined it was so; but it

was for your own advancement. I have heard you speak to the young girl. You thought but of yourselves; you do not love each other. She thought but of her rank, and you of your ambition. One loves in order to hear one's self called perfect, and to be adored; it is still the same egoism."

"Cruel serpent!" cried Cinq-Mars; "is it not enough that thou hast caused our deaths? Why dost thou come here to cast thy venom upon the life thou hast taken from us? What demon has suggested to thee thy horrible analysis of hearts?"

"Hatred of everything which is superior to myself," replied Joseph, with a low and hollow laugh, "and the desire to crush those I hate under my feet, have made me ambitious and ingenious in finding the weakness of your dreams."

"Just Heaven, dost thou hear him?" exclaimed Cinq-Mars, rising and extending his arms upwards.

The solitude of his prison; the pious conversations of his friend; and, above all, the presence of death, which, like the light of an unknown star, paints in other colors the objects we are accustomed to see; meditations on eternity; and (shall we say it?) the great efforts he had made to change his heart-rending regrets into immortal hopes, and to direct to God all that power of love which had led him astray upon earth, — all this combined had worked a strange revolution in him; and like those ears of corn which ripen suddenly on receiving one ray from the sun, his soul had acquired light, exalted by the mysterious influence of death.

"Just Heaven!" he repeated, "if this wretch and

his master are human, can I also be a man? Behold, O God, behold two distinct ambitions, — the one egoistical and bloody, the other devoted and unstained; theirs roused by hatred, and ours inspired by love. Look down, O Lord, judge, and pardon! Pardon, for we have greatly erred in walking but for a single day in the same paths which, on earth, possess but one name to whatever end it may tend!"

Joseph interrupted him harshly, stamping his foot on the ground, —

"When you have finished your prayer," said he, "you will perhaps inform me whether you will assist me; and I will instantly —"

"Never, impure wretch, never!" said Henri d'Effiat. "I will never unite with you in an assassination. I refused to do so when powerful, and upon yourself."

"You were wrong; you would have been master now."

"And what happiness should I find in my power when shared as it must be by a woman who does not understand me; who loved me feebly, and prefers a crown?"

"Inconceivable folly!" said the Capuchin, laughing.

"All with her; nothing without her, — that was my desire."

"It is from obstinacy and vanity that you persist; it is impossible," replied Joseph. "It is not in nature."

"Thou who wouldst deny the spirit of self-sacrifice," answered Cinq-Mars, "dost thou understand that of my friend?"

"It does not exist; he follows you because —"

Here the Capuchin, slightly embarrassed, reflected an instant.

"Because — because — he has formed you; you are his work; he is attached to you by the self-love of an author. He was accustomed to lecture you; and he felt that he should not find another pupil so docile to listen to and applaud him. Constant habit has persuaded him that his life was bound to yours; it is something of that kind. He will accompany you mechanically. Besides, all is not yet finished; we shall see the end and the examination. He will certainly deny all knowledge of the conspiracy."

"He will not deny it!" exclaimed Cinq-Mars, impetuously.

"He knew it, then? You confess it," said Joseph, triumphantly; "you have not said as much before."

"Oh, heavens, what have I done!" gasped Cinq-Mars, hiding his face.

"Calm yourself; he is saved, notwithstanding this avowal, if you accept my offer."

D'Effiat remained silent for a short time.

The Capuchin continued, —

"Save your friend. The king's favor awaits you, and perhaps the love which has erred for a moment."

"Man, or whatever else thou art! if thou hast in thee anything resembling a heart," answered the prisoner, "save him! He is the purest of created beings; but convey him far away while yet he sleeps, for should he awake, thy endeavors would be vain."

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THE PRISONERS

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"What good would that do me?" said the Capuchin, laughing. "It is you and your favor that I want."

The impetuous Cinq-Mars rose, and seizing Joseph by the arm, eying him with a terrible look, said, —

"I degraded him in interceding with thee for him." He continued, raising the tapestry which separated his apartment from that of his friend, "Come, and doubt, if thou canst, devotion and the immortality of the soul. Compare the uneasiness and misery of thy triumph with the calmness of our defeat, the meanness of thy reign with the grandeur of our captivity, thy sanguinary vigils to the slumbers of the just."

A solitary lamp threw its light on De Thou. The young man was kneeling on a cushion, surmounted by a large ebony crucifix. He seemed to have fallen asleep while praying. His head, inclining backwards, was still raised towards the cross. His pale lips wore a calm and divine smile.

"Holy Father, how he sleeps!" exclaimed the astonished Capuchin, thoughtlessly uniting to his frightful discourse the sacred name he every day pronounced. He suddenly retired some paces, as if dazzled by a heavenly vision.

"Nonsense, nonsense!" he said, shaking his head, and passing his hand rapidly over his face. "All this is childishness. It would overcome me if I reflected on it. These ideas may serve as opium to produce a calm. But that is not the question; say yes or no."

"No," said Cinq-Mars, pushing him to the door by the shoulder. "I will not accept life; and I do not re-

gret having compromised De Thou, for he would not have bought his life at the price of an assassination. And when he yielded at Narbonne, it was not that he might escape at Lyons."

"Then wake him, for here come the judges," said the furious Capuchin, in a sharp, piercing voice.

Lighted by *flambeaux*, and preceded by a detachment of the Scotch guards, fourteen judges entered, wrapped in long robes, and whose features were not easily distinguished. They seated themselves in silence on the right and left of the huge chamber. They were the judges delegated by the cardinal to judge this sad and solemn affair. All true men to the Cardinal Richelieu, and in his confidence, who from Tarascon had chosen and instructed them. He had the Chancellor Seguier brought to Lyons, *to avoid*, as he stated in the instructions he sent by Chavigny to the King Louis XIII., — "*to avoid all the delays which would take place if he were not present. M. de Marillac*," he adds, "*was at Nantes for the trial of Chalais*, M. de Chateau-Neuf at Toulouse, superintending the death of M. de Montmorency, and M. de Bellièvre at Paris, conducting the trial of M. de Biron. The authority and intelligence of these gentlemen in forms of justice are indispensable."

The chancellor arrived with all speed. But at this moment he was informed that he was not to appear, for fear that he might be influenced by the memory of his ancient friendship for the prisoner, whom he only saw *tête-à-tête*. The commissioners and himself had previously and rapidly received the cowardly depositions of the Duc d'Orléans, at Villefranche, in Beaujolais, and

then at Vivey,[1] two miles from Lyons, where this wretched prince had received orders to go, begging forgiveness, and trembling, although surrounded by his followers, whom from very pity he had been allowed to retain, carefully watched, however, by the French and Swiss guards. The cardinal had dictated to him his part and answers word for word; and in consideration of this docility, they had exempted him in form from the painful task of confronting MM. de Cinq-Mars and de Thou.[2] The chancellor and commissioners had also prepared M. de Bouillon, and strong with their preliminary work, they visited in all their strength the two young criminals whom they had determined not to save.

History has only handed down to us the names of the State counsellors who accompanied Pierre Seguier, but not those of the other commissioners, of whom it is only mentioned that there were six from the parliament of Grenoble, and two presidents. The counsellor, or reporter of the State, Laubardemont, who had directed them in all, was at their head. Joseph often whispered to them with the most studied politeness, glancing at Laubardemont with a ferocious sneer.

It was arranged that an armchair should serve as a bar; and all were silent in expectation of the prisoner's answer.

He spoke in a soft and clear voice, —

"Say to M. le Chancelier that I have the right of

[1] House which belonged to an Abbé d'Esnay, brother of M. de Villeroy, called Montrésor.

[2] See Notes and Illustrations.

appeal to the parliament of Paris, and to object to my judges, because two of them are my declared enemies, and at their head one of my friends, M. de Seguier himself, whom I maintained in his charge.

"But I will spare you much trouble, gentlemen, by pleading guilty to the whole charge of conspiracy, arranged and conducted by myself alone. It is my wish to die. I have nothing to add for myself; but if you would be just, you will not harm the life of him whom the king has pronounced to be the most honest man in France, and who dies for my sake alone."

"Summon him," said Laubardemont.

Two guards entered the apartment of De Thou, and led him forth. He advanced, and bowed gravely, while an angelical smile played upon his lips. Embracing Cinq-Mars, "Here at last is our day of glory," said he. "We are about to gain heaven and eternal happiness."

"We understand," said Laubardemont, "we have been given to understand by M. de Cinq-Mars himself that you were acquainted with this conspiracy?"

De Thou answered instantly, and without hesitation. A half-smile was still on his lips, and his eyes cast down.

"Gentlemen, I have passed my life in studying human laws, and I know that the testimony of one accused person cannot condemn another. I can also repeat what I said before, that I should not have been believed had I denounced the king's brother without proof. You perceive, then, that my life and death entirely rest with myself. I have, however, well weighed the one and the

other. I have clearly foreseen that whatever life I may hereafter lead, it could not but be most unhappy after the loss of M. de Cinq-Mars. I therefore acknowledge and confess that I was aware of his conspiracy. I did my utmost to prevent it, to deter him from it. He believed me to be his only and faithful friend, and I would not betray him. Therefore I condemn myself by the very laws which were set forth by my father, who, I hope, forgives me."

At these words, the two friends precipitated themselves into each other's arms.

Cinq-Mars exclaimed, —

"My friend, my friend, how bitterly I regret that I have caused your death! Twice I have betrayed you; but you shall know in what manner."

But De Thou, embracing and consoling his friend, answered, raising his eyes from the ground, —

"Ah, happy are we to end our days in this manner! Humanly speaking, I might complain of you; but God knows how much I love you. What have we done to merit the grace of martyrdom, and the happiness of dying together?"

The judges were not prepared for this mildness, and looked at each other with surprise.

"If they would only give me a good partisan," muttered a hoarse voice (it was Grandchamp, who had crept into the room, and whose eyes were red with fury), "I would soon rid Monseigneur of all these black-looking fellows." Two men with halberds immediately placed themselves silently at his side. He said no more, and to compose himself retired to a window which over-

looked the river, whose tranquil waters the sun had not yet lighted with its beams, and appeared to pay no attention to what was passing in the room.

However, Laubardemont, fearing that the judges might be touched with compassion, said in a loud voice, —

"In pursuance of the order of Monseigneur the Cardinal, these two men will be put to the rack; that is to say, to the ordinary and extraordinary question."

Indignation forced Cinq-Mars again to assume his natural character; crossing his arms, he made two steps towards Laubardemont and Joseph, which alarmed them. The former involuntarily placed his hand to his forehead.

"Are we at Loudun?" exclaimed the prisoner; but De Thou, advancing, took his hand and held it. Cinq-Mars was silent, then continued in a calm voice, looking steadfastly at the judges, —

"Messieurs, this measure appears to me rather harsh; a man of my age and rank ought not to be subjected to these formalities. I have confessed all, and I will confess it all again. I willingly and gladly accept death; it is not from souls like ours that secrets can be wrung by bodily suffering. We are prisoners by our own free will, and at the time chosen by us. We have confessed enough for you to condemn us to death; you shall know nothing more. We have obtained what we wanted."

"What are you doing, my friend?" interrupted De Thou. "He is mistaken, gentlemen, we do not refuse this martyrdom which God offers us; we demand it."

"But," said Cinq-Mars, "do you need such infamous tortures to obtain salvation, — you who are already a

martyr, a voluntary martyr to friendship? Gentlemen, it is I alone who possess important secrets; it is the chief of a conspiracy who knows all. Put me alone to the torture if we must be treated like the worst of malefactors."

"For the sake of charity," added De Thou, "deprive me not of equal suffering with my friend; I have not followed him so far, to abandon him at this dreadful moment, and not to use every effort to accompany him to heaven."

During this debate, another was going forward between Laubardemont and Joseph. The latter, fearing that torments would induce him to disclose the secret of his recent proposition, advised that they should not be resorted to; the other, not thinking his triumph complete by death alone, absolutely insisted on their being applied. The judges surrounded and listened to these secret agents of the prime minister; however, many circumstances having caused them to suspect that the influence of the Capuchin was more powerful than that of the judge, they took part with him, and decided for mercy, when he finished by these words uttered in a low voice, —

"I know their secrets. There is no necessity to force them from their lips, because they are useless, and relate to too high circumstances. M. le Grand has no one to denounce but the king, and the other the queen. It is better that we should remain ignorant. Besides, they will not confess. I know them; they will be silent, — the one from pride, the other through piety. Let them alone. The torture will wound them; they will be disfig-

ured and unable to walk. That will spoil the whole ceremony; they must be kept to appear."

This last observation prevailed. The judges retired to deliberate with the chancellor. While departing, Joseph whispered to Laubardemont,—

"I have provided you with enough pleasure here; you will still have that of deliberating, and then you shall go and examine three men who are confined in the northern tower."

These were the three judges who had condemned Urbain Grandier.

As he spoke, he laughed heartily, and was the last to leave the room, pushing the astonished master of requests before him.

The sombre tribunal had scarcely disappeared when Grandchamp, relieved from his two guards, hastened towards his master, and seizing his hand, said,—

"In the name of Heaven, come to the terrace, Monseigneur! I have something to show you; in the name of your mother, come!"

But at that moment the chamber door was opened, and the old Abbé Quillet appeared.

"My children! my dear children!" exclaimed the old man, weeping bitterly. "Alas! why was I only permitted to enter to-day? Dear Henri, your mother, your brother, your sister, are concealed here."

"Be quiet, M. l'Abbé!" said Grandchamp; "do come to the terrace, Monseigneur."

But the old priest still detained and embraced his pupil.

"We hope," said he; "we hope for mercy."

"I shall refuse it," said Cinq-Mars.

"We hope for nothing but the mercy of God," added De Thou.

"Silence!" said Grandchamp, "the judges are returning."

And the door opened again to admit the dismal procession, from which Joseph and Laubardemont were missing.

"Gentlemen," exclaimed the good abbé, addressing the commissioners, "I am happy to tell you that I have just arrived from Paris, and that no one doubts but that all the conspirators will be pardoned. I have had an interview at her Majesty's apartments with Monsieur himself; and as to the Duc de Bouillon, his examination is not unfav — ".

"Silence!" cried M. de Seyton, the lieutenant of the Scotch guards; and the commissioners entered and again arranged themselves in the apartment.

M. de Thou, hearing them summon the criminal recorder of the presidial of Lyons to pronounce the sentence, involuntarily launched out in one of those transports of religious joy which are never displayed but by the martyrs and saints at the approach of death; and advancing towards this man, he exclaimed, —

"Quam speciosi pedes evangelizantium pacem, evangelizantium bona!"

Then, taking the hand of Cinq-Mars, he knelt down bareheaded to receive the sentence, as was the custom. D'Effiat remained standing; and they dared not compel him to kneel. The sentence was pronounced in these words: —

"The attorney-general, prosecutor on the part of the State, on a charge of high treason; and Messire Henri d'Effiat de Cinq-Mars, master of the horse, aged twenty-two, and François Auguste de Thou, aged thirty-five, of the king's privy council, — prisoners in the château of Pierre-Encise, at Lyons, accused and defendants on the other part :

"Considered, the special trial commenced by the aforesaid attorney-general against the said D'Effiat and De Thou; informations, interrogations, confessions, denegations, and confrontations, and authenticated copies of the treaty with Spain, it is considered in the delegated chamber: —

"(1) That he who conspires against the person of the ministers of princes is considered by the ancient laws and constitutions of the emperors to be guilty of high treason; (2) That the third ordinance of the King Louis XI. renders any one liable to the punishment of death who does not reveal a conspiracy against the State.

"The commissioners deputed by his Majesty have declared the said D'Effiat and De Thou guilty and convicted of the crime of high treason: —

"The said D'Effiat, for the conspiracies and enterprises, league, and treaties, formed by him with the foreigner against the State;

"And the said De Thou, for having a thorough knowledge of this conspiracy.

"In reparation of which crimes, they have deprived them of all honors and dignities, and condemned them to be deprived of their heads on a scaffold, which is for this purpose erected in the Place des Terreaux, in this city.

"It is further declared that all and each of their possessions, real and personal, be confiscated to the king, and that those which they hold from the crown do pass immediately to it again, — of the aforesaid goods, sixty thousand livres being devoted to pious uses."

After the sentence was pronounced, M. de Thou exclaimed in a loud voice, —

"God be blessed! God be praised!"

"I have never feared death," said Cinq-Mars, coldly.

Then, according to the forms prescribed, M. Seyton, the lieutenant of the Scotch guards, an old man upwards of sixty years of age, declared with emotion that he placed the prisoners in the hands of the Sieur Thomé, provost of the merchants of Lyons; he then took leave of them, followed by the whole of the body-guard, silently, and in tears.

"Weep not," said Cinq-Mars; "tears are useless. Rather pray for us; and be assured that I do not fear death."

He shook them by the hand, and De Thou embraced them; after which, they left the apartment, their eyes filled with tears, and hiding their faces in their cloaks.

"Barbarians!" exclaimed the Abbé Quillet; "to find arms against them, one must search the whole arsenal of tyrants. Why did they admit me at this moment?"

"As a confessor, sir," whispered one of the commissioners; "for no stranger has entered this place these two months."

As soon as the huge gates of the prison were closed, and the outside gratings lowered, "To the terrace, in the name of Heaven!" again exclaimed Grandchamp. And he drew his master and De Thou thither.

The old preceptor followed them, weeping.

"What do you want with us in a moment like this?" said Cinq-Mars, with an indulgent gravity.

"Look at the chains of the town," said the faithful servant.

The rising sun had hardly tinged the sky. In the horizon a line of vivid yellow was visible, upon which the mountain's rough blue outlines were boldly traced; the waves of the Saône, and the chains of the town, hanging from one bank to the other, were still veiled by a light vapor, which also rose from Lyons and concealed the roofs of the houses from the eye of the spectator. The first tints of the morning light had as yet colored only the most elevated points of the magnificent landscape. In the city the steeples of the Hôtel de Ville and St. Nizier, and on the surrounding hills, the monasteries of the Carmelites and Ste. Marie, and the entire fortress of Pierre-Encise, were gilded with the fires of the coming day. The joyful peals from the churches were heard, the peaceful matins from the convent and village bells. The walls of the prison were alone silent.

"Well," said Cinq-Mars, "what are we to see, — the beauty of the plains, the richness of the city, or the calm peacefulness of these villages? Ah, my friend, in every place there are to be found passions and griefs, like those which have brought us here."

The old abbé and Grandchamp leaned over the parapet, watching the bank of the river.

"The fog is so thick, we can see nothing yet," said the abbé.

"How slowly our last sun appears!" said De Thou.

"Do you not see low down there, at the foot of the rocks on the opposite bank, a small white house, between the Halincourt gate and the Boulevard St. Jean?" asked the abbé.

"I see nothing," answered Cinq-Mars, "but a mass of dreary wall."

"Hark!" said the abbé; "some one speaks near us!"

In fact, a confused, low, and inexplicable murmur was heard in a little turret, the back of which rested upon the platform of the terrace. As it was scarcely larger than a pigeon-house, the prisoners had not until now observed it.

"Are they already coming to fetch us?" said Cinq-Mars.

"Bah! bah!" answered Grandchamp, "do not make yourself uneasy; it is the Tour des Oubliettes. I have prowled round the fort for two months, and I have seen men fall from there into the water at least once a week. Let us think of our affair. I see a light down there."

An invincible curiosity, however, led the two prisoners to look at the turret, in spite of the horror of their own situation. It advanced to the extremity of the rock, over a gulf of foaming green water of great depth. A wheel of a mill long deserted was seen turning with great rapidity. Three distinct sounds were now heard, like those of a drawbridge suddenly lowered and raised to its former position by a recoil or spring striking against the stone walls; and three times a black substance was seen to fall into the water with a splash.

"Mercy! can these be men?" exclaimed the abbé, crossing himself.

"I thought I saw brown robes turning in the air," said Grandchamp; "they are the cardinal's friends."

A horrible cry was heard from the tower, accompanied by an impious oath. The heavy trap groaned for the fourth time. The green water received with a loud noise a burden which cracked the enormous wheel of the mill; one of its large spokes was torn away, and a man entangled in its beams appeared above the foam which he colored with his blood. He rose twice, and sank beneath the waters, shrieking violently; it was Laubardemont.

Cinq-Mars drew back in horror.

"There is a Providence," said Grandchamp; "Urbain Grandier summoned him in three years. But come, come! the time is precious! Do not remain motionless. Be it he, I am not surprised, for those wretches devour each other. But let us endeavor to deprive them of their choicest morsel. *Vive Dieu!* I see the signal! We are saved! All is ready; run to this side, M. l'Abbé! See the white handkerchief at the window! our friends are prepared."

The abbé seized the hands of both his friends, and drew them to that side of the terrace towards which they had at first looked. "Listen to me, both of you," said he. "You must know that none of the conspirators have profited by the retreat you secured for them. They have all hastened to Lyons, disguised and in great number; they have distributed sufficient gold in the city to secure them from being betrayed; they are resolved

to make an attempt to deliver you. The time chosen is that when they are conducting you to the scaffold; the signal is your hat, which you will place on your head when they are to commence."

The worthy abbé, half weeping, half smiling hopefully, related that upon the arrest of his pupil, he had hastened to Paris; that such secrecy enveloped all the cardinal's actions that none there knew the place in which the master of the horse was detained. Many said that he was banished; and when the reconciliation between Monsieur and the Duc de Bouillon and the king was known, men no longer doubted that the life of the other was assured, and ceased to speak of this affair, which, not having been executed, compromised few persons. They had even in some measure rejoiced in Paris to see the town of Sedan and its territory added to the kingdom in exchange for the letters of *abolition* granted to the duc, acknowledged innocent in common with Monsieur; so that the result of all the arrangements had been to excite admiration of the cardinal's ability, and of his clemency towards the conspirators, who, it was said, had contemplated his death. They even spread the report that he had facilitated the escape of Cinq-Mars and De Thou, occupying himself generously with their retreat to a foreign land, after having bravely caused them to be arrested in the midst of the camp of Perpignan.

At this part of the narrative, Cinq-Mars could not avoid forgetting his resignation, and clasping his friend's hand, "*Arrested!*" he exclaimed. "Must we renounce even the honor of having voluntarily surren-

dered ourselves? Must we sacrifice all, even the opinion of posterity?"

"There is vanity again," replied De Thou, placing his fingers on his lips. "But hush! let us hear the abbé to the end."

The tutor, not doubting that the calmness which these two young men exhibited arose from the joy they felt in finding their escape assured, and seeing that the sun had hardly yet dispersed the morning mists, yielded himself without restraint to the involuntary pleasure which old men always feel in recounting new events, even though they afflict the hearers. He related all his fruitless endeavors to discover his pupil's retreat, unknown to the court and the town, where none, indeed, dared to pronounce the name of Cinq-Mars in the most secret asylums. He had only heard of the imprisonment at Pierre-Encise from the queen herself, who had deigned to send for him, and charge him to inform the Maréchale d'Effiat and all the conspirators that they might make a desperate effort to deliver their young chief. Anne of Austria had even ventured to send many of the gentlemen of Auvergne and Touraine to Lyons to assist in their last attempt.

"The good queen!" said he; "she wept greatly when I saw her, and said that she would give all she possessed to save you. She reproached herself deeply for some letter, I know not what. She spoke of the welfare of France, but did not explain herself. She said that she admired you, and conjured you to save yourself, if it were only through pity for her, whom you would otherwise consign to everlasting remorse."

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"Said she nothing else?" interrupted De Thou, supporting Cinq-Mars, who grew visibly paler.

"Nothing more," said the old man.

"And no one else spoke of me?" inquired the master of the horse.

"No one," said the abbé.

"If she had but written to me!" murmured Henri.

"Remember, my father, that you were sent here as a confessor," said De Thou.

Here old Grandchamp, who had been kneeling before Cinq-Mars, and dragging him by his clothes to the other side of the terrace, exclaimed in a broken voice, —

"Monseigneur — my master — my good master — do you see them? Look there — 't is they! 't is they — all of them!"

"Who, my old friend?" asked his master.

"Who? Great Heaven! look at that window! Do you not recognize them? Your mother, your sisters, and your brother."

And the day, now fairly broken, showed him in the distance several women waving their handkerchiefs; and there, dressed all in black, stretching out her arms towards the prison, sustained by those about her, Cinq-Mars recognized his mother, with his family, and his strength failed him for a moment. He leaned his head upon his friend's breast and wept.

"How many times must I, then, die?" he murmured; then, with a gesture, returning from the top of the tower the salutations of his family, "Let us descend quickly, my father!" he said to the old abbé. "You will tell me at the tribunal of penitence, and before

God, whether the remainder of my life is worth my shedding more blood to preserve it."

It was there that Cinq-Mars confessed to God what he alone and Marie de Mantua knew of their secret and unfortunate love. "He gave to his confessor," says Father Daniel, "a portrait of a noble lady set in diamonds, which were to be sold, and the money employed in pious works."

M. de Thou, after having confessed, wrote a letter;[1] after which (according to the account given by his confessor) he said, "This is the last thought I will bestow upon this world; let us depart for heaven!" and walking up and down the room with long strides, he recited aloud the psalm, *Miserere mei Deus*, with an incredible ardor of spirit, his whole frame trembling so violently it seemed as if he did not touch the earth, and that the soul was about to make its exit from his body. The guards were mute at this spectacle, which made them all shudder with respect and horror.

Meanwhile all was calm in the city of Lyons, when to the great astonishment of its inhabitants, they beheld the entrance through all its gates of troops of infantry and cavalry, which they knew were encamped at a great distance. The French and the Swiss guards, the regiment of Pompadours, the men-at-arms of Maurevert, and the carabineers of La Roque, all defiled in silence. The cavalry, with their muskets on the pommel of the

[1] See the copy of this letter to Madame la Princesse de Gueméné, in the notes at the end of the volume.

saddle, silently drew up round the château of Pierre-Encise; the infantry formed a line upon the banks of the Saône from the gate of the fortress to the Place des Terreaux. It was the usual spot for execution.

"Four companies of the *bourgeois* of Lyons, called *pennonage*, of about eleven or twelve hundred men, were ranged [says the journal of Montrésor] in the midst of the Place des Terreaux, so as to enclose a space of about eighty paces each way, into which they admitted no one but those who were absolutely necessary.

"In the centre of this space was raised a scaffold about seven feet high and nine feet square, in the midst of which, somewhat forward, was placed a stake three feet in height, in front of which was a block half a foot high, so that the principal face of the scaffold looked towards the shambles of the Terreaux, by the side of the Saône. Against the scaffold was placed a short ladder of eight rounds, in the direction of the Dames de St. Pierre."

Nothing had transpired in the town as to the name of the prisoners. The inaccessible walls of the fortress let none enter or leave but at night, and the deep dungeons had sometimes confined father and son for years together, four feet apart from each other, without their even being aware of the vicinity. The surprise was extreme at these striking preparations, and the crowd collected, not knowing whether for a fête or for an execution.

This same secrecy which the agents of the minister had strictly preserved was also carefully adhered to by the conspirators, for their heads depended on it.

Montrésor, Fontrailles, the Baron de Beauvau, Olivier d'Entraigues, Gondi, the Comte du Lude, and the Ad-

vocate Fournier, disguised as soldiers, workmen, and morris-dancers, armed with poniards under their clothes, had dispersed amid the crowd more than five hundred gentlemen and domestics, disguised like themselves. Horses were ready on the road to Italy, and boats upon the Rhone had been previously engaged. The young Marquis d'Effiat, elder brother of Cinq-Mars, dressed as a Carthusian, traversed the crowd without ceasing between the Place des Terreaux and the little house in which his mother and sister were concealed with the Presidente de Pontac, the sister of the unfortunate De Thou. He reassured them, gave them from time to time a ray of hope, and returned to the conspirators to satisfy himself that each was prepared for action.

Each soldier forming the line had at his side a man ready to poniard him.

The vast crowd, heaped together behind the line of guards, pushed them forward, passed their lines, and made them lose ground. Ambrosio, the Spanish servant whom Cinq-Mars had saved, had taken charge of the captain of the pikemen, and, disguised as a Catalonian musician, had commenced a dispute with him, pretending to be determined not to cease playing the hurdy-gurdy.

Every one was at his post.

The Abbé de Gondi, Olivier d'Entraigues, and the Marquis d'Effiat, were in the midst of a group of fish-women and oyster-wenches, who were disputing and bawling, abusing one of their number younger and more timid than her masculine companions. The brother of Cinq-Mars approached to listen to their quarrel.

"And why," said she to the others, "would you have Jean le Roux, who is an honest man, cut off the heads of two Christians, because he is a butcher by trade? So long as I am his wife, I 'll not allow it. I 'd rather — "

"Well, you are wrong!" replied her companions. "What is 't to thee whether the meat he cuts is eaten or not eaten? Why, thou 'lt have a hundred crowns to dress thy three children all in new clothes. Thou 'rt lucky to be the wife of a butcher. Profit, then, *ma mignonne*, by what God sends thee by the favor of his Eminence."

"Let me alone!" answered the first speaker. "I 'll not accept it. I've seen these fine young gentlemen at the windows. They look as mild as lambs."

"Well! and are not thy lambs and calves killed?" said Femme le Bon. "What fortune falls to this little woman! What a pity! especially when it is from the reverend Capuchin!"

"How horrible is the gayety of the people!" said Olivier d'Entraigues, unguardedly. All the women heard him, and began to murmur against him.

"*Of the people!*" said they; "and whence comes this little bricklayer with his plastered clothes?"

"Ah!" interrupted another, "dost not see that 't is some gentleman in disguise? Look at his white hands! He never worked a square; 't is some little dandy conspirator. I 've a great mind to go and fetch the captain of the watch to arrest him."

The Abbé de Gondi felt all the danger of this situation, and throwing himself with an air of anger upon

Olivier, and assuming the manners of a joiner, whose costume and apron he had adopted, he exclaimed, seizing him by the collar, —

"You 're just right. 'T is a little rascal that never works! These two years that my father 's apprenticed him, he has done nothing but comb his hair to please the girls. Come, get home with you!"

And striking him with his rule, he drove him through the crowd, and returned to place himself on another part of the line. After having well reprimanded the thoughtless page, he asked him for the letter which he said he had to give to M. de Cinq-Mars when he should have escaped. Olivier had carried it in his pocket for two months. He gave it him. "It is from one prisoner to another," said he, "for the Chevalier de Jars, on leaving the Bastille, sent it me from one of his companions in captivity."

"*Ma foi!*" said Gondi, "there may be some important secret in it for our friends. I'll open it. You ought to have thought of it before. Ah, bah! it is from old Bassompierre. Let us read it.

"My dear Child, — I learn from the depths of the Bastille, where I still remain, that you are conspiring against the tyrant Richelieu, who does not cease to humiliate our good old nobility and the parliaments, and to sap the foundations of the edifice upon which the State reposes. I hear that the nobles are taxed and condemned by petty judges, contrary to the privileges of their condition, forced to the *arrière-ban*, despite the ancient customs."

"Ah! the old dotard!" interrupted the page, laughing immoderately.

"Not so foolish as you imagine, only he is a little behindhand for our affair.

"I cannot but approve this generous project, and I pray you give me to wot all your proceedings —"

"Ah! the old language of the last reign!" said Olivier. "He can't say, 'Make me acquainted with your proceedings,' as we now say."

"Let me read, for Heaven's sake!" said the abbé; "a hundred years hence they'll laugh at our phrases." He continued, —

"I can counsel you, notwithstanding my great age, in relating to you what happened to me in 1560.

"Ah, faith! I've not time to waste in reading it all. Let us see the end.

"When I remember my dining at the house of Madame la Maréchale d'Effiat, your mother, and ask myself what has become of all the guests, I am really afflicted. My poor Puy-Laurens has died at Vincennes, of grief at being forgotten by Monsieur in his prison; De Launay killed in a duel, and I am grieved at it, for although I was little satisfied with my arrest, he did it with courtesy, and I have always thought him a gentleman. As for me, I am under lock and key until the death of M. le Cardinal. Ah, my child! we were thirteen at table. We must not laugh at old superstitions. Thank God that you are the only one to whom evil has not arrived!"

"There again!" said Olivier, laughing heartily; and this time the Abbé de Gondi could not maintain his gravity, despite all his efforts.

They tore the useless letter to pieces, that it might

not prolong the detention of the old maréchal, should it be found, and drew near the Place des Terreaux and the line of guards, whom they were to attack when the signal of the hat should be given by the young prisoner.

They beheld with satisfaction all their friends at their post, and ready to "play with their knives," to use their own expression. The people, pressing around them, favored them without being aware of it. There came near the abbé a troop of young ladies, dressed in white and veiled. They were going to church to communicate; and the nuns who conducted them, thinking, like most of the people, that the preparations were intended to do honor to some great personage, allowed them to mount upon some large hewn stones, collected behind the soldiers. There they grouped themselves with the grace natural to their age, like twenty beautiful statues upon a single pedestal. One would have taken them for those vestals whom antiquity invited to the sanguinary shows of the gladiators. They whispered to each other, looking around them, laughing and blushing together like children.

The Abbé de Gondi saw with impatience that Olivier was again forgetting his character of conspirator and his costume of a bricklayer, in ogling these girls, and assuming a mien too elegant, an attitude too refined, for the position in life he was supposed to occupy. He already began to approach them, turning his hair with his fingers, when Fontrailles and Montrésor fortunately arrived in the dress of Swiss soldiers. A group of gentlemen, disguised as sailors, followed them with iron-shod staves in

their hands. There was a paleness on their faces which announced no good.

"Stop here!" said one of them to his suite; "this is the place."

The sombre air and the silence of these spectators contrasted with the gay and anxious looks of the girls, and their childish exclamations.

"Ah, the fine procession!" they cried; "there are at least five hundred men with cuirasses and red uniforms, upon fine horses. They 've got yellow feathers in their large hats."

"They are strangers, — Catalonians," said a French guard.

"Whom are they conducting here? Ah, here is a fine gilt coach! but there 's no one in it."

"Ah! I see three men on foot; where are they going?"

"To death!" said Fontrailles, in a deep, stern voice which silenced all around. Nothing was heard but the slow tramp of the horses, which suddenly stopped, from one of those delays that happen in all processions. They then beheld a painful and singular spectacle. An old man with a tonsured head walked with difficulty, sobbing violently, supported by two young men of interesting and engaging appearance, who held one of each other's hands behind his bent shoulders, while with the other hand each held one of his arms. The one on the left was dressed in black; he was grave, and his eyes were cast down. The other, much younger, was attired in a striking dress.[1] A *pourpoint* of Holland

[1] A full-length portrait of M. de Cinq-Mars is preserved at Versailles.

cloth, adorned with broad gold lace, and with large embroidered sleeves, covered him from the neck to the waist, somewhat in the fashion of a woman's corset; the rest of his vestments were in black velvet, embroidered with silver palms. Gray boots with red heels, to which were attached golden spurs; a scarlet cloak with gold buttons, — all set off to advantage his elegant and graceful figure. He bowed right and left with a melancholy smile.

An old servant, with white mustaches and beard, followed with his head bent down, leading two chargers, richly caparisoned. The young ladies were silent; but they could not restrain their sobs.

"It is, then, that poor old man whom they are leading to the scaffold," they exclaimed; "and his children are supporting him."

"Upon your knees, ladies," said a man, "and pray for him!"

"On your knees," cried Gondi, "and let us pray that God will deliver him!"

All the conspirators repeated, "On your knees! on your knees!" and set the example to the people, who imitated them in silence.

"We can see his movements better now," said Gondi, in a whisper to Montrésor. "Stand up; what is he doing?"

"He has stopped, and is speaking on our side, saluting us; I think he has recognized us."

Every house, window, wall, roof, and raised platform that looked upon the place, was filled with persons of every age and condition.

The most profound silence prevailed throughout the immense multitude. One might have heard the wings of a gnat, the breath of the slightest wind, the passage of the grains of dust which it raised; yet the air was calm, the sun brilliant, the sky blue. The people listened attentively. They were close to the Place des Terreaux; they heard the blows of the hammer upon the planks, then the voice of Cinq-Mars.

A young Carthusian thrust his pale face between two guards. All the conspirators rose above the kneeling people. Every one put his hand to his belt or in his bosom, approaching close to the soldier whom he was to poniard.

"What is he doing?" asked the Carthusian. "Has he his hat upon his head?"

"He throws his hat upon the ground far from him," calmly answered the arquebusier.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE FÊTE.

"Triste et parée."

"Mon Dieu! qu'est-ce que ce monde!"
Dernières paroles de M. Cinq-Mars.

THE same day that the melancholy procession took place at Lyons, and during the scenes we have just witnessed, a magnificent fête was given at Paris with all the luxury and bad taste of the time. The powerful cardinal had determined to fill the first two towns in France with his pomp.

The cardinal's return was the occasion on which this fête was announced, as given to the king and all his court. Master of the empire by force, the cardinal desired to be master of opinion by seduction; and weary of dominating, he hoped to please. The tragedy of "Mirame" was to be represented in a hall constructed expressly for this great day, which raised the expenses of this entertainment, says Pelisson, to three hundred thousand crowns.

The entire guard of the prime minister [1] were under arms; his four companies of musketeers and *gens d'armes* were ranged in a line upon the vast staircases, and at the entrance of the long galleries of the Palais-Cardinal. This brilliant Pandemonium, where the mortal sins have a temple on each floor, belonged that day to pride alone, which occupied it from top to bottom. Upon each step was placed one of the arquebusiers of the cardinal's guard, holding a torch in one hand and a long carabine in the other. The crowd of his gentlemen circulated between these living candelabra, while in the large garden, surrounded by huge chestnut-trees, now replaced by a range of arches, two companies of mounted light-horse, their muskets in their hands, were ready to obey the first order or the first fear of their master.

The cardinal, carried and followed by his thirty-eight pages, took his seat in his box hung with purple, facing that in which the king was half reclining behind the green curtains which preserved him from the glare of the *flambeaux*. The whole court filled the boxes, and rose when the king appeared. The orchestra commenced a brilliant overture, and the pit was thrown open to all the men of the town and the army who presented themselves. Three impetuous waves of spectators rushed in and filled it in an instant. They were standing, and so thickly pressed together that the movement of a single arm sufficed to cause in the crowd a movement similar to the waving of a field of corn. There was one man

[1] In 1626, the king gave the cardinal a guard of two hundred arquebusiers; in 1632, four hundred foot musketry; in 1638, two companies of *gens d'armes* and light-horse were raised by the cardinal himself.

whose head thus described a large circle, as that of a compass, without his feet quitting the spot to which they were fixed; and some young men were carried out fainting. The minister, contrary to his usual custom, advanced his skeleton head out of his box, and saluted the assembly with an air which was meant to be gracious. This grimace obtained an acknowledgment only from the boxes; the pit was silent. Richelieu had wished to show that he did not fear the public judgment upon his work, and had given orders to admit without distinction all who should present themselves. He began to repent of this, but too late. The impartial assembly was as cold as the *tragédie-pastorale* itself. In vain did the theatrical *bergères*, covered with jewels, raised upon red heels, with crooks ornamented with ribbons, and garlands of flowers upon their robes, which were stuck out with *vertugadins*, die of love in tirades of two hundred verses; in vain did the *amants parfaits* starve themselves in solitary caves, deploring their death in emphatic tones, and fastening to their hair ribbons of the favorite color of their mistress; in vain did the ladies of the court exhibit signs of perfect ecstasy, leaning over the edge of their boxes, and even attempt a few fainting-fits, — the silent pit gave no other sign of life than the perpetual shaking of black heads with long hair.

The cardinal bit his lips and played the abstracted during the first and second acts; the silence in which the third and fourth passed off so wounded his paternal heart that he had himself raised half out of the balcony, and in this uncomfortable and ridiculous position signed to the court to remark the finest passages, and himself

gave the signal for applause. It was acted upon from some of the boxes, but the impassible pit was more silent than ever; leaving the affair entirely between the stage and the upper regions, they obstinately remained neuter. The master of Europe and France then cast a furious look at this handful of men who dared not to admire his work, feeling in his heart the wish of Nero, and thought for a moment how happy he should be if all those men had but one head.

Suddenly this black and before silent mass became animated, and endless rounds of applause burst forth, to the great astonishment of the boxes, and above all, of the minister. He bent forward and bowed gratefully, but drew back on perceiving that the clapping of hands interrupted the actors every time they wished to proceed. The king had the curtains of his box, until then closed, opened, to see what excited so much enthusiasm. The whole court leaned forward from their boxes, and perceived among the spectators on the stage, a young man, humbly dressed, who had just seated himself there with difficulty. Every look was fixed upon him. He appeared utterly embarrassed by this, and sought to cover himself with his little black cloak, — far too short for the purpose. "Le Cid! le Cid!" cried the pit, incessantly applauding. The terrified Corneille escaped behind the scenes, and all was again silent. The cardinal, beside himself with fury, had his curtain closed, and was carried into his galleries, where was performed another scene, prepared long before by the care of Joseph, who had tutored the attendants upon the point before quitting Paris. Cardinal Mazarin exclaimed that it would

be quicker to pass his Eminence through a long glazed window, which was only two feet from the ground, and led from his box to the apartments; and it opened, and the page passed his armchair through it. Hereupon a hundred voices rose to proclaim the accomplishment of the grand prophecy of Nostradamus. They said, —

"The *bonnet rouge!* — that's Monseigneur; *quarante onces!* — that's Cinq-Mars; *tout finira!* — that's De Thou. What a providential incident! His Eminence reigns over the future as over the present."

He advanced thus upon his ambulatory throne through the long and splendid galleries, listening to this delicious murmur of a new flattery; but insensible to the hum of voices which deified his genius, he would have given all their praises for one word, one single gesture of that immovable and inflexible public, even had that word been a cry of hatred; for clamor can be stifled, but how avenge one's self on silence? The people can be prevented from striking, but who can prevent their waiting? Pursued by the troublesome phantom of public opinion, the gloomy minister only thought himself in safety when he reached the interior of his palace amid his flattering courtiers, whose adorations soon made him forget that a miserable pit had dared not to admire him. He had himself placed like a king in the midst of his vast apartments, and looking around him, attentively counted the powerful and submissive men who surrounded him. He counted them, and admired himself. The chiefs of all the great families, the princes of the Church, the presidents of all the parliaments, the governors of the provinces, the marshals and general-in-chief of the armies,

the nuncio, the ambassadors of all the kingdoms, the deputies and senates of the republics, were motionless, submissive, and ranged around him, as if awaiting his orders. There was no longer a look to brave his look, no longer a word to raise itself against his will, not a project that men dared to form in the most secret recesses of the heart, not a thought which did not proceed from his. Mute Europe listened to him by its representatives. From time to time he raised an imperious voice, and threw a self-satisfied word to this pompous circle, as a man who throws a copper coin among a crowd of beggars. Then might be distinguished, by the pride which lit up his looks and the joy visible in his countenance, the prince who had received such a favor. He found himself all at once transformed into another man, and seemed to have made a step in the hierarchy of power, so surrounded with unlooked-for adorations and sudden caresses was the fortunate courtier, whose obscure happiness the cardinal did not even perceive. The king's brother and the Duc de Bouillon stood in the crowd, whence the minister did not deign to withdraw them. Only he ostentatiously said that it would be well to dismantle a few fortresses, spoke at length of the necessity of pavements and quays at Paris, and said in two words to Turenne that he might perhaps be sent to the army in Italy, to seek his bâton as maréchal from Prince Thomas.

While Richelieu thus played with the great and small things of Europe, amid his noisy fête, the queen was informed at the Louvre that the time was come for her to proceed to the cardinal's palace, where the king

awaited her after the tragedy. The serious Anne of Austria did not witness any play; but she could not refuse her presence at the fête of the prime minister. She was in her oratory, ready to depart, and covered with pearls, her favorite ornament; standing opposite a large glass with Marie de Mantua, she was arranging more to her satisfaction one or two details of the young duchesse's toilet, who, dressed in a long pink robe, was herself contemplating with attention, though with somewhat of ennui, and a little sullenness, the *ensemble* of her appearance. The queen saw her own work in Marie, and more troubled than she, thought with apprehension of the moment when this transient calm would cease, despite the profound knowledge she had of the feeling but frivolous character of Marie. Since the conversation at St. Germain, since the fatal letter, she had not quitted the young princess, and had bestowed all her care to lead her mind to the path which she had traced out for her; for the most decided feature in the character of Anne of Austria was an invincible obstinacy in her calculations, to which she would fain have subjected all events and all passions with a geometrical exactitude. There is no doubt that to this positive and immovable mind we must attribute all the misfortunes of her regency. The sombre reply of Cinq-Mars; his arrest; his trial,—all had been concealed from the Princesse Marie, whose first fault, it is true, had been a movement of self-love and a momentary forgetfulness. However, the queen was good-hearted, and had bitterly repented her precipitation in writing words so decisive, and whose consequences had been so serious;

and all her endeavors had been applied to mitigate the results. In reflecting upon her conduct in reference to the happiness of France, she applauded herself for having thus, at one stroke, stifled the germ of a civil war which would have shaken the State to its very foundations. But when she approached her young friend and gazed on that charming being whose happiness she was thus destroying in its bloom, and reflected that an old man upon a throne, even, would not recompense her for the eternal loss she was about to sustain; when she thought of the entire devotion, the total abnegation of himself, she had witnessed in a young man of twenty-two, of so lofty a character, and almost master of the kingdom, — she pitied Marie, and admired from her very soul the man whom she had judged so ill.

She would at least have desired to explain his worth to her whom he had loved so deeply, and who as yet knew him not; but she still hoped that the conspirators assembled at Lyons would be able to save him, and once knowing him to be in a foreign land, she could tell all to her dear Marie.

As to the latter, she had at first feared war. But surrounded by the queen's people, who had let nothing reach her ear but news dictated by this princess, she knew, or thought she knew, that the conspiracy had not taken place; that the king and the cardinal had returned to Paris nearly at the same time; that Monsieur, relapsed for a while, had reappeared at court; that the Duc de Bouillon, on ceding Sedan, had also been restored to favor; and that if the grand écuyer had not yet appeared, the reason was the more decided

animosity of the cardinal towards him, and the greater part he had taken in the conspiracy. But common sense and natural justice clearly said that having acted under the orders of the king's brother, his pardon ought to follow that of this prince. Everything, then, had calmed the first uneasiness of her heart, while nothing had softened the kind of proud resentment she felt against Cinq-Mars, so indifferent as not to inform her of the place of his retreat, known to the queen and the whole court, while, she said to herself, she had thought but of him. Besides, for two months the balls and fêtes had so rapidly succeeded each other, and so many mysterious duties had commanded her presence, that she had for reflection and regret scarce more than the time of her toilet, at which she was generally almost alone. Every evening she regularly commenced the general reflection upon the ingratitude and inconstancy of men, — a profound and novel thought, which never fails to occupy the head of a young person in the time of first love, — but sleep never permitted her to finish the reflection; and the fatigue of dancing closed her large black eyes ere her ideas had found time to classify themselves in her memory, or to present her with any very distinct images of the past. In the morning she was surrounded by the young princesses of the court, and ere she had well time to dress had to present herself in the queen's apartment, where awaited her the eternal, but now less disagreeable, homage of the prince palatine; the Poles had had time to learn at the court of France that mysterious reserve, that eloquent silence which so pleases the women,

because it enhances the importance of things always secret, and elevates those whom they respect, so as to preclude the idea of exhibiting suffering in their presence. Marie was regarded as promised to King Uladislas; and she herself — we must confess it — had so well accustomed herself to this idea that the throne of Poland occupied by another queen would have appeared to her a monstrous thing. She did not look forward with pleasure to the period of ascending it, but had, however, taken possession of the homage which was rendered her beforehand. Thus, without avowing it even to herself, she greatly exaggerated the supposed offences of Cinq-Mars, which the queen had expounded to her at St. Germain.

"You are fresh as the roses in this bouquet," said the queen. "Come, *ma chère*, are you ready? What means this pouting air? Come, let me fasten this ear-ring. Do you not like these toys, eh? Will you have another set of ornaments?"

"Oh, no, Madame. I think that I ought not to decorate myself at all, for no one knows better than yourself how unhappy I am. Men are very cruel towards us!

"I have since reflected on what you said to me, and all is now clear to me. Yes, it is quite true that he did not love me, for had he loved me, he would have renounced an enterprise that gave me so much uneasiness. I told him, I remember, indeed, which was very decided," she added, with an important and even solemn air, "that he would be a rebel, — yes, Madame, a rebel. I told him so at St. Eustache. But I see that your

Majesty was right. I am very unfortunate! He had more ambition than love." Here a tear of pique escaped from her eyes, and rolled quickly down her cheek, as a pearl upon a rose.

"Yes, it is certain," she continued, fastening her bracelets; "and the greatest proof is that in the two months he has renounced his enterprise — you told me that you had saved him — he has not let me know the place of his retreat, while I during that time have been weeping, have been imploring all your power in his favor; have sought but a word that might inform me of his proceedings. I have thought but of him; and even now I refuse every day the throne of Poland, because I wish to prove to the end that I am constant, that you yourself cannot make me disloyal to my attachment, far more serious than his, and that we are of higher worth than the men. But, however, I think I may attend this fête, since it is not a ball."

"Yes, yes, my dear child! come, come!" said the queen, desirous of putting an end to this childish talk, which afflicted her all the more that it was herself who had encouraged it. "Come, you will see the union that prevails between the princes and the cardinal, and we shall perhaps hear some good news." They departed.

When the two princesses entered the long galleries of the Palais-Cardinal, they were received and coldly saluted by the king and the minister, who, closely surrounded by silent courtiers, were playing at chess upon a small low table. All the ladies who entered with the queen or followed her, spread through the apartments; and soon soft music sounded in one of the

saloons, — a gentle accompaniment to the thousand private conversations carried on round the play tables.

Near the queen passed, saluting her, a young newly married couple, — the happy Chabot and the beautiful Duchesse de Rohan. They seemed to shun the crowd, and to seek apart a moment to speak to each other of themselves. Every one received them with a smile and looked after them with envy. Their happiness was expressed as strongly in the countenances of others as in their own.

Marie followed them with her eyes. "Still they are happy," she whispered to the queen, remembering the censure which in her hearing had been thrown upon the match.

But without answering, Anne of Austria, fearful that in the crowd some inconsiderate expression might inform her young friend of the mournful event so interesting to her, placed herself with Marie behind the king. Monsieur, the prince palatine, and the Duc de Bouillon, came to speak to her with a gay and lively air. The second, however, casting upon Marie a severe and scrutinizing glance, said to her, —

"Madame la Princesse, you are most surprisingly beautiful and gay this evening."

She was confused at these words, and at seeing the speaker walk away with a sombre air. She addressed herself to the Duc d'Orléans, who did not answer, and seemed not to hear her. Marie looked at the queen, and thought she remarked paleness and disquiet on her features. Meantime no one ventured to approach the minister, who was deliberately meditating his moves.

Mazarin alone, leaning over his chair, followed all the strokes with a servile attention, giving gestures of admiration every time that the cardinal played. Application to the game seemed to have dissipated for a moment the cloud that usually shaded the minister's brow. He had just advanced a tower, which placed Louis's king in that false position which is called "stale mate," — a situation in which the ebony king, without being personally attacked, can neither advance nor retire in any direction. The cardinal, raising his eyes, looked at his adversary and smiled with one corner of his mouth, not being able to avoid a secret mental analogy. Then observing the dim eyes and dying countenance of the prince, he whispered to Mazarin, —

"Faith, I think he 'll go before me. He is greatly changed."

At the same time he himself was seized with a long and violent cough, accompanied internally with the sharp, deep pain he so often felt in the side. At the sinister warning he put a handkerchief to his mouth, which he withdrew covered with blood. To hide it, he threw it under the table, and looked around him with a stern smile, as if to forbid observation. Louis XIII., perfectly insensible, did not make the least movement beyond arranging his men for another game with a skeleton and trembling hand. These two dying men seemed to be throwing lots which should depart first.

At this moment a clock struck the hour of midnight. The king raised his head.

"Ah, ah!" he said; "this morning at twelve M. le Grand had a disagreeable time of it."

A piercing shriek was uttered behind him. He shuddered, and threw himself forward, upsetting the table. Marie de Mantua lay senseless in the arms of the queen, who, weeping bitterly, said in the king's ear, —

"Ah, Sire, your axe has a double edge."

She then bestowed all her cares and maternal kisses upon the young princess, who, surrounded by all the ladies of the court, only came to herself to burst into a torrent of tears. As soon as she opened her eyes, "Alas! yes, my child," said Anne of Austria. "My poor girl, you are Queen of Poland."

It has often happened that the same event which causes tears to flow in the palace of kings has spread joy without, for the people ever suppose that happiness reigns at festivals. There were five days' rejoicings for the return of the minister, and every evening under the windows of the Palais-Cardinal and those of the Louvre pressed the people of Paris. The late disturbances had given them a taste for public movements. They rushed from one street to another with a curiosity at times insulting and hostile, sometimes walking in silent procession, sometimes sending forth loud peals of laughter or prolonged yells, of which no one understood the meaning. Bands of young men fought in the streets and danced in rounds in the squares, as if manifesting some secret hope of pleasure and some insensate joy, grievous to the upright heart. It was remarkable that the most profound silence prevailed exactly in those places where the minister had ordered rejoicings, and that the people

passed disdainfully before the illuminated façade of his palace. If some voices were raised, it was to read aloud in a sneering tone the legends and inscriptions with which the idiot flattery of some obscure writers had surrounded the portraits of the minister. One of these pictures was guarded by arquebusiers, who, however, could not preserve it from the stones which were thrown at it from a distance by unseen hands. It represented the cardinal-generalissimo wearing a casque surrounded by laurels. Above it was inscribed, —

"Grand duc! c'est justement que la France t'honore;
Ainsi que le dieu Mars dans Paris on t'adore."

These fine phrases did not persuade the people that they were happy. They no more adored the cardinal than they did the god Mars, but they accepted his fêtes because they served as a covering for disorder. All Paris was in an uproar. Men with long beards, carrying torches, measures of wine, and two drinking-cups, which they knocked together with a great noise, went along, arm in arm, shouting in chorus with rude voices an old round of the League, —

"Reprenons la danse;
Allons, c'est assez.
Le printemps commence;
Les rois sont passés.

"Prenons quelque trêve;
Nous sommes lassés.
Les rois de la fève
Nous ont harassés.

"Allons, Jean du Mayne,
Les rois sont passés."[1]

[1] See Mémoires de la Ligue.

The frightful bands who howled forth these words traversed the Quais and the Pont-Neuf, squeezing against the high houses, which then covered the latter, the peaceful citizens who were led there by simple curiosity. Two young men, wrapped in cloaks, thus thrown one against the other, recognized each other by the light of a torch placed at the foot of the statue of Henri IV., which had been lately raised.

"What! still at Paris?" said Corneille to Milton. "I thought you were in London."

"Hear you the people, sir? Do you hear them? What is this ominous chorus,—

'Les rois sont passés'?"

"That is nothing, sir. Listen to their conversation."

"The parliament is dead," said one of the men; "the nobles are dead. Let us dance; we are the masters. The old cardinal is dying. There is no longer any but the king and ourselves."

"Do you hear that drunken wretch, sir?" asked Corneille. "All our epoch is in those words of his."

"What! is this the work of the minister who is called great among you, and even by other nations? I do not understand him."

"I will explain the matter to you presently," answered Corneille. "But first, listen to the concluding part of this letter, which I received to-day. Draw near this light under the statue of the late king. We are alone. The crowd has passed. Listen!—

"It was by one of those unforeseen circumstances which prevent the accomplishment of the noblest enterprises that

we were not able to save MM. de Cinq-Mars and de Thou. We might have foreseen that prepared for death by long meditation, they would themselves refuse our aid; but this idea did not occur to any of us. In the precipitation of our measures, we also committed the fault of dispersing ourselves too much in the crowd, so that we could not take a sudden resolution. I was unfortunately stationed near the scaffold; and I saw our unfortunate friends advance to the foot of it, supporting the poor Abbé Quillet, who was destined to behold the death of the pupil whose birth he had witnessed. He sobbed aloud, and had strength enough only to kiss the hands of the two friends. We all advanced, ready to throw ourselves upon the guards at the announced signal; but I saw with grief M. de Cinq-Mars cast his hat from him with an air of disdain. Our movement had been observed, and the Catalonian guard was doubled round the scaffold. I could see no more; but I heard much weeping around me. After the three usual blasts of the trumpet, the recorder of Lyons, on horseback at a little distance from the scaffold, read the sentence of death, to which neither of the prisoners listened. M. de Thou said to M. de Cinq-Mars, —

"'Well, dear friend, which shall die first? Do you remember Saint Gervais and Saint Protais?'

"'Which you think best,' answered Cinq-Mars.

"The second confessor, addressing M. de Thou, said, 'You are the elder.'

"'True,' said M. de Thou; and turning to M. le Grand, 'You are the most generous; you will show me the way to the glory of heaven.'

"'Alas!' said Cinq-Mars; 'I have opened to you that of the precipice; but let us meet death nobly, and we shall revel in the glory and happiness of heaven!'

"Hereupon he embraced him, and ascended the scaffold with surprising address and agility. He walked round the scaffold, and contemplated the whole of the great assembly with a calm countenance which betrayed no sign of fear, and

a serious and graceful manner. He then went round once more, saluting the people on every side, without appearing to recognize any of us, with a majestic and charming expression of face; he then knelt down, raising his eyes to heaven, adoring God, and recommending himself to him. As he embraced the crucifix, the father confessor called to the people to pray for him; and M. le Grand, opening his arms, still holding his crucifix, made the same request to the people. Then he readily knelt before the block, holding the stake, placed his neck upon it, and asked the confessor, 'Father, is this right?' Then, while they were cutting off his hair, he raised his eyes to heaven, and said, sighing, —

"'My God, what is this world? My God, I offer thee my death as a satisfaction for my sins!'

"'What are you waiting for? What are you doing there?' he said to the executioner, who had not yet taken his axe from an old bag he had brought with him. His confessor, approaching, gave him a medallion; and he, with an incredible tranquillity of mind, begged the father to hold the crucifix before his eyes, which he would not allow to be bound. I saw the two trembling hands of the Abbé Quillet, who raised the crucifix. At this moment a voice, as clear and pure as that of an angel, commenced the *Ave maris Stella.* In the universal silence I recognized the voice of M. de Thou, who was at the foot of the scaffold; the people repeated the sacred strain. M. de Cinq-Mars clung more tightly to the stake; and I saw a raised axe, made like the English axes. A terrible cry of the people from the Place, the windows, and the towers told me that it had fallen, and that the head had rolled to the ground. I had happily strength enough left to think of his soul, and to commence a prayer for him; I mingled it with that which I heard pronounced aloud by our unfortunate and pious friend De Thou. I rose and saw him spring upon the scaffold with such promptitude that he might almost have been said to fly. The father and he recited a psalm; he uttered it with the ardor of a seraphim, as if his

soul had borne his body to heaven. Then, kneeling down, he kissed the blood of Cinq-Mars as that of a martyr, and became himself a greater martyr. I do not know whether God was pleased to grant him this last favor; but I saw with horror that the executioner, terrified no doubt at the first blow he had given, struck him upon the top of his head, whither the unfortunate young man raised his hand; the people sent forth a long groan, and advanced against the executioner. The poor wretch, terrified still more, struck him another blow, which only cut the skin and threw him upon the scaffold, where the executioner rolled upon him to despatch him. A strange event terrified the people as much as the horrible spectacle. M. de Cinq-Mars's old servant held his horse as at a military funeral; he had stopped at the foot of the scaffold, and like a man paralyzed, watched his master to the end, then suddenly, as if struck by the same axe, fell dead under the blow which had taken off his master's head.

"I write these sad details in haste, on board a Genoese galley, into which Fontrailles, Gondi, Entraigues, Beauvau, Du Lude, myself, and others of the chief conspirators have retired. We are going to England to await until time shall deliver France from the tyrant whom we could not destroy. I abandon forever the service of the base prince who betrayed us. MONTRÉSOR.

"Such," continued Corneille, "has been the fate of these two young men whom you lately saw so powerful. Their last sigh was that of the ancient monarchy. Nothing more than a court can reign here henceforth; the nobles and the senates are destroyed."[1]

"And this is your pretended great man!" said Milton. "What has he sought to do? He would,

[1] The parliament was called "senate." There still exist letters addressed to Monseigneur d'Harlay, prince of the senate of Paris, and first judge of the king.

then, create republics for future ages, since he destroys the basis of your monarchy?"

"Look not so far," answered Corneille; "he only seeks to reign until the end of his life. He has worked for the present and not for the future; he has continued the work of Louis XI.; and neither one nor the other knew what they were doing."

The Englishman smiled.

"I thought," he said, "that true genius followed another path. This man has shaken all that he ought to have supported, and they admire him! I pity your nation."

"Pity it not!" exclaimed Corneille, warmly; "a man passes away, but a people is renewed. This people, sir, is gifted with an immortal energy, which nothing can destroy; its imagination often leads it astray, but superior reason will ever ultimately master its disorders."

The two young and already great men walked, as they conversed, upon the space which separates the statue of Henri IV. from the Place Dauphiné; they stopped a moment in the centre of this Place.

"Yes, sir," continued Corneille, "I see every evening with what rapidity a noble thought finds its echo in French hearts; and every evening I retire happy at the sight. Gratitude prostrates the poor people before this statue of a good king! Who knows what other monument another passion may raise near this? Who can say how far the love of glory will lead our people? Who knows that in the place where we now are, there may not be raised a pyramid taken from the East?"

"These are the secrets of the future," said Milton. "I, like yourself, admire your impassioned nation; but I fear them for themselves. I do not well understand them; and I do not recognize their wisdom when I see them lavishing their admiration upon men such as he who now rules you. The love of power is very puerile; and this man is devoured by it, without having force enough to seize it wholly. By an utter absurdity he is a tyrant under a master. Thus has this colossus, never firmly balanced, been all but overthrown by the finger of a boy. Does that indicate genius? No, no! when genius condescends to quit the lofty regions of its true home for a human passion, at least it should grasp that passion in its entirety. Since Richelieu only aimed at power, why did he not, if he was a genius, make himself absolute master of power? I am going to see a man who is not yet known, and whom I see swayed by this miserable ambition; but I think that he will go farther. His name is Cromwell!"

NOTES AND HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS.

PAGE 215.

"'HE was borne,' says an ancient manuscript journal," etc.

"His boat touched the shore at the Balme Bonneri. In this town, where many of the nobility awaited him, among others, M. le Comte de Suze, Monseigneur de Viviers, saluted him as he left his boat; but he was obliged to delay speaking to him until he had reached the lodging which had been prepared for him in the town. When his boat came to the shore, a wooden bridge was placed from the boat to the land. After it had been ascertained to be safe, they brought out the bed in which the said lord was reclining, for he was ill with an ulcer in his arm. Six powerful men carried the litter upon two poles, and the holders in which the men placed their hands were covered with buff leather. They wore on the shoulders and around the neck certain straps lined with cotton, with buff leather handles, which sustained the bars passed through them. In this manner these men carried the bed and the said lord through the towns to the houses where he was to lodge. But that which astonished every one was that he entered the houses by the windows; for before he arrived, the masons whom he brought with him took out the windows of the houses, or made openings in the walls of the chambers in which he was to lodge, and then made a wooden bridge which ascended from the street to the window or openings of his lodging. Thus, in his portable bed, he passed through the streets, and along the bridge into another bed prepared for him in his chamber, which his officers had hung with scarlet and violet

damask, and rich furniture. At Viviers he lodged in the house of Montargny, of the university of our church. They took out the window of the chamber which looks over the square; and the wooden bridge to ascend to it reached from the shop of Noël de Vielh, in the house of Ales on the north side, to the window into which the lord cardinal was carried in the manner aforesaid. His chamber was guarded on every side, — under the window, and at the sides, and on the roof.

"His court or suite was composed of people of importance. Civility, affability, and courtesy, went with them. The devotion with them was very great. The soldiers, who are generally indevout and impious, practised great devotions. The day after his arrival, Sunday, several of them confessed and communicated with demonstration of great piety. They committed no insolences in the town, living quite like young girls. The nobility, too, practised great devotion. When they were on the Rhone, although there were many boatmen, as well with the boats as with the horses, no one dared to blaspheme. It was quite miraculous how such men could exhibit such control over themselves. They were never heard to utter any words but those which were necessary for the management of their barks, and these so modestly that every one was enchanted.

"Monseigneur le Cardinal Bigni lodged at the archdeacon's. The house of M. Panisse had been prepared for Monseigneur le Cardinal Mazarin; but on leaving St. Andeol, he took post to go to the king. Sunday the 25th, the said lord was carried back to his boat in the same order."[1]

Last moments of MM. de Cinq-Mars and de Thou.

The bravery of M. de Cinq-Mars was bold, noble, and elegant. There has been none better attested. If after so many historical details, sketched in this work, new proofs were wanting, I should add, to confirm them, the letter (see page 274) from M. de Marca, and fragments of the report which follows, where we remark this passage: "It is an almost incredible wonder that he displayed no fear, trouble, or emotion," etc.

[1] Extract from the manuscript journal of J. de Banne.

The collection, entitled "Journal de M. le Cardinal-Duc de Richelieu qu'il a faict durant le grand orage de la court, en l'année 1642, tiré de ses Mémoires qu'il a escrit de sa main," adds these words to the indictment, "M. de Cinq-Mars never changed countenance or tone, — always the same sweetness, moderation, and confidence."

Tallemant des Réaux says, in his Memoirs, vol. i. p. 418, etc., —

"M. le Grand was firm; and the internal combat he suffered did not appear on his countenance. He died with an astonishing grandeur of courage, and did not condescend to harangue the people. He would not have his eyes blindfolded. His eyes were open when he was struck, and he held the stake so firmly that it was with great difficulty they removed his arms. He was full of courage, and died like a gentleman. Although they had resolved not to subject him to the question, as the sentence purported, they however showed him the rack. This touched him, but did not induce him to forget his courageous mien; and he was already taking off his *pourpoint*, for, as he supposed, the torture, when they merely made him raise his hand to affirm the truth."

Several accounts add that when conducted to the torture chamber, he exclaimed, "Whither are you leading me? How disagreeable the scent is here!" raising his handkerchief to his nose. This disdain appears to me to be one of those touches of *bravoure moqueuse* in which our history abounds.

It recalls to me the jest of a young man, who, conducted to the scaffold of 1795, said to the driver of the tumbril, "Postilion, drive us well. You shall have *something to drink*." The French revenge themselves on death by jesting at it.

Fragment of a letter from M. de Marca, councillor of State, to M. de Brienne, secretary of State, describing what passed at the trial of MM. de Cinq-Mars and de Thou.

Sir, — I thought you might be pleased to be informed of the principal things which passed at the sentence which has been pronounced against MM. le Grand and de Thou. I have therefore taken the liberty to narrate it to you in the present letter. M. le Chancelier commenced with the deposition of M. le Duc d'Orléans, which he received in judicial form at Ville Franche in Beau-Jolois, where Monsieur then was, and which was read to Monsieur in the presence of seven commissioners, who assisted M. le Chancelier. In this he declared that M. le Grand had solicited him to unite with him, and with M. de Bouillon, and to treat with Spain, which they all three resolved upon in the Hôtel de Venise, in the faubourg St. Germain, about last New Year's day.

Fontrailles was selected to proceed to Madrid, where he drew up the treaty with the count-duke, by which the King of Spain promised to furnish twelve thousand foot and five thousand horse, tried troops, forty thousand crowns to Monsieur to raise new levies, etc. . . .

The knowledge of the treaty, without having revealed it, added to the proofs which are in the process, of interventions for the union of the accomplices, and the space of six weeks or more which M. de Thou passed with M. le Grand, lodging in his house near Perpignan, counselling him in his affairs, after the knowledge that the said Sieur le Grand had treated with Spain, and therefore that he was guilty of the crime of high treason. All this combined to make the judges condemn De Thou, according to the laws of the ordinance expressly made and provided against those who have been acquainted with conspiracy against the State, and have not revealed it, even though their silence had not been accompanied by the many other circumstances observable in the case of the said Sire de Thou. *He died in a truly Christian manner, and as a man of courage,* meriting a special description. M. le Grand also displayed *a firmness always equal, and firmly reconciled to death, with an admirable coolness and Christian constancy and devotion.* I entreat your permission to quit this mournful subject, to assure you that I continue in the respect, etc.

Marca.

Lyons, this 16th September, 1642.

After the letter of M. de Marca, there was printed, in 1645, a journal, which has lately been attributed on no very clear grounds to a recorder of the city of Lyons. This report was greatly diffused at the time, and published, as we see, *one hundred and seventy-two years ago.* A portion of these details was reproduced in 1826 by the author of this work, who cited it; and its principal features are scattered in the course of the composition. However, some of these facts, for which there was no room, were designedly left out, and have been omitted in the reprints which have been made of this report. It will not be profitless to reproduce them here. They complete the portraits of the characters of this work, and show that the author has been religiously faithful to history, and has not allowed his imagination to go beyond the circle traced by truth.

"We have seen the favorite of the greatest and most just of kings lay his head upon the scaffold at the age of twenty-two, but with a firmness which can hardly be paralleled in our history. We have seen a councillor of State die like a saint for a crime which men cannot justly pardon. There is no one in the world, who, knowing their conspiracy against the State, would not consider them deserving of death; and there are few people, who, knowing their condition and their noble natural qualities, would not pity their misfortune.

"M. de Cinq-Mars arrived at Lyons, September the 4th of this present year, 1642, at two o'clock in the afternoon, in a coach drawn by four horses, in which were *gardes du corps*, with their muskets in their hands, and surrounded by foot-guards to the number of a hundred, belonging to M. le Cardinal-Duc; before them marched two hundred cavalry, most of them Catalonians, and following them were three hundred others, well mounted.

"M. le Grand was dressed in dark-colored Holland cloth, covered with gold lace, and a scarlet mantle with large silver buttons; he being upon the Pont du Rosne, before entering the town, asked M. Seyton, the lieutenant of the Scottish guards, if he would allow the door of the coach to be shut, — which was refused him, and he was conducted over the Pont St. Jean, and thence to the Change, and thence, by the Rue de Flandre, to the foot of the château of Pierre-Encise, showing him-

self while passing through the streets continually at one or the other door, saluting the people with a cheerful countenance, leaning half out of the carriage, and even recognizing many persons, whom he saluted by their names.

"Arrived at Pierre-Encise, he was surprised when they told him he must alight, and get on horseback outside the town, to reach the castle.

"'This is, then, the last ride I shall take,' said he; for he had imagined that he was to go to the wood of Vincennes, and he had often asked the guards whether they would allow him to hunt when he should be there.

"His prison was at the foot of the great tower of the castle, which had no other view than two little windows, which looked into a small garden, at the foot of which were guards. M. Seyton slept with four guards in the antechamber, and there were guards at all the doors.

"M. le Cardinal Bichy went to visit him the next day, and asked whether he should like them to send some one with whom he might amuse himself in his prison. He replied that he should be very glad, but that he did not deserve any one should take the trouble.

"Consequently, M. le Cardinal de Lyons sent for the Père Malavalette, Jesuit, whom he commissioned to visit him, since he desired it; which he did on the 6th, at five in the morning, remaining with him until eight o'clock. He found him in a red damask bed, very uncomfortable, which made him pale and weak. The good father knew so well how to please him that he asked for him again in the evening; and so he continued to visit him, morning and evening, the whole time of his imprisonment. And he afterwards made a report to MM. le Cardinal-Duc and le Cardinal de Lyons, and to M. le Chancelier, of all that he had said; and this same father had a long conference with his ducal Eminence, although the latter gave audience to no one at the time.

"On the 7th, M. le Chancelier went to visit M. de Cinq-Mars, and treated him very civilly, telling him that he had no reason to fear, but on the contrary, to hope everything that was to his advantage; that he well knew he had to deal with a good judge, who would assuredly not forget the favors he had received from *his benefactor;* that he well knew that it was through his goodness and power that the king had not deprived him of his charge; that this favor was so great that it not

only merited an enduring remembrance, but also eternal gratitude; and that this was one of the occasions on which to show his gratitude. The apparent reason for these professions was that M. le Grand had once softened the king, who was greatly enraged against M. le Chancelier; but the true reason was the fear that M. de Cinq-Mars might refuse to have him for judge, and appeal to the parliament of Paris, *in order that he might be delivered by the people, who loved him passionately.*

"M. le Grand replied that this courtesy filled him with shame and confusion. 'But, however,' said he, 'I see clearly, by the manner in which they are proceeding in this affair, that they are determined to have my life. *It is all over with me; the king has abandoned me. I look upon myself as a victim whom they are about to sacrifice to the passions of my enemies and the king's weakness.*' To which M. le Chancelier replied that these sentiments were not just, and that his experience was quite to the contrary. 'May God grant it be so!' said M. le Grand; 'but I cannot believe it.'

"On the 8th, M. le Chancelier went to hear him, accompanied by six masters of requests, two presidents, and six counsellors of Grenoble, who, having questioned him from six in the morning to two in the afternoon, could get nothing from him to make out the case."

This report, which, as I have said, was printed at the end of the letter of M. de Marca, has also this curious anecdote, which attests the incredible firmness of mind of M. de Thou, —

"After his confession, he was visited by Father Jean Terrasse, of the convent of the Observance de Saint François at Tarascon, who had visited and consoled him during his imprisonment at Tarascon. He was glad to see him, and walked with him some time, holding a spiritual conversation. This father came in connection with a vow which M. de Thou had made at Tarascon, which was, should he be delivered, to found a chapel of three hundred livres annual rent in the church of the Pères Cordeliers of this town of Tarascon. He gave orders for this foundation, desiring to acquit himself of his vow, since God, he said, was about to deliver him, not only from a prison of stone, but also from the prison of his body. He asked for ink and paper, and wrote this beautiful inscription, which he directed to be placed in this chapel: —

Christo liberatori,
votum in carcere pro libertate
conceptum.

Fran. August. Thuanus
e carcere vitæ jam jam
liberandus merito solvit.

XII Septemb. M.D.C.XLII.
confitebor tibi, Domine, quoniam
exaudisti me, et factus es mihi
in salutem.

"In this inscription we must admire the readiness and clearness of his mind; and it will make those who consider it acknowledge that the fear of death had not the power to cause him any agitation of mind. He begged M. Thomé to give his compliments to the Cardinal de Lyons, and to inform him that had it pleased God to deliver him from this peril, he had designed to quit the world, and to give himself up entirely to the service of God.

"He wrote two letters, which were taken open to M. le Chancelier, and then placed in the hands of his confessor to read them; these letters being sealed, he said, 'There are my last thoughts for the world; let us depart for Paradise.' And from that time he continued without interruption his spiritual discourses, and confessed a second time. He asked at intervals whether the time for the execution approached, when they were to be bound, and begged that they would inform him when the executor of justice was there, that he might embrace him; but he only saw him on the scaffold."

The paraphrase made by M. de Thou.

Father Montbrun, M. de Thou's confessor, is quoted in this report, and gives these details, —

"M. de Thou, kneeling on the scaffold, also recited the 115th Psalm, and paraphrased it in French nearly all through, in a firm voice and with vigorous action, with great fervor mingled with a holy joy, incredible to those who did not witness it. This is the paraphrase he made, which I would fain accompany with the action which he applied to it. I have endeavored to retain his own words: —

"'*Credidi, propter quod locutus sum.* My God, *credidi!* — I have believed, and I believe firmly, that you are my Creator and my gracious Father; that you suffered for me; that you redeemed me with your most precious blood; that you have opened Paradise for me. *Credidi,* — I ask of you, my God, one grain, one little grain of that living faith which inflamed the hearts of the first Christians. *Credidi, propter quod locutus sum,* — grant, O my God, that I may not speak to you with my lips only, but that my heart may respond to my words, and my will not belie my mouth! *Credidi,* — my God, my tongue adores you not; I have not sufficient eloquence. But I adore you in spirit, — yes, in spirit. My God, I adore in spirit and in truth! Yes, *credidi,* I have confided in you, my God, and I have abandoned myself to your mercy, after the many favors you have granted me. *Propter quod locutus sum,* — and in this confidence I have spoken, I have said all, I have accused myself.

"'*Ego autem humiliatus nimis.* It is true, Lord, that I am humbled exceedingly, but still not so much so as I deserve. *Ego dixi in excessu meo. Omnis homo mendax.* Ah, how true it is that the whole world is but falsehood, folly, and vanity! Ah, how true it is! *Omnis homo mendax! Quid retribuam Domino pro omnibus quæ retribuit mihi.* [He repeated this with great vehemence.] *Calicem salutis accipiam.* My father, we must drink this chalice of death courageously. Yes, I receive it willingly, and am ready to drink it to the dregs.

"'*Et nomen Domini invocabo.* You will aid me,' he said, turning to me, 'my father, to implore the divine assistance, that it may please God to fortify my weakness, and to give me the courage I need to drink the cup which God in his goodness has prepared for my salvation.'

"He passed over the two following verses of the Psalm, and exclaimed in a loud and animated voice, '*Dirupisti, Domine, vincula mea!* O my God, you have done a great thing for me! — you have broken the ties which bound me so strongly to the world! It needed a divine power to disengage me from them. *Dirupisti, Domine, vincula mea!* [These are the exact words he uttered here.] Those who have brought me here have done me a great service. What obligations do I not owe them! Yes, they have done me a great good, since they have taken me from this world to place me ' heaven!'

"Here I reminded him that he must pardon everything, and have no resentment against them. At this word he turned towards me, still on his knees as he was, and with a graceful action. 'What, my father,

say you of resentment? Ah, God knows, God is my witness that I love them with my whole heart, and that in my heart there is no animosity towards any one in the world! *Dirupisti, Domine, vincula mea, tibi sacrificabo hostiam laudis.* Behold the host, Lord [pointing to himself], behold the host which is now to be sacrificed to you. *Tibi sacrificabo hostiam laudis, et nomen Domini invocabo. Vota mea, Domine, reddam* [stretching out his arms and looking round with an agreeable movement, and a cheerful and radiant countenance] *in conspectu omnis populi ejus.* Yes, Lord, I will render up to you my wishes, my spirit, my heart, my soul, my life, *in conspectu omnis populi ejus*, — before all this people, in the sight of this assembly! *In atriis domus Domini, in medio tui, Jerusalem. In atriis domus Domini.* We are here at the entrance of the Lord; yes, it is from hence, it is from Lyons, — from Lyons that we shall mount above [raising his arms towards heaven]. Lyons, I owe thee more gratitude than to my birth-place, which only bestowed upon me a miserable life, while thou givest me this day an eternal life! *in medio tui, Jerusalem.* Nay, truly I am too eager for this death. Is it not wrong, my father?' he said in a lower tone, smiling, and turning towards me. 'I am too happy! Is there not vanity in this? I would not have it so.'"

Details of the Execution of M. de Cinq-Mars.

(From the same Report.)

"It is an almost incredible wonder that he displayed no fear, trouble, or emotion, but appeared always gay, assured, unalterable, and showed so much firmness of spirit that all those who saw him are still astonished at it.

"M. de Cinq-Mars, without having his eyes bandaged, laid his neck upon the block very properly, holding his face straight out towards the front of the scaffold; and tightly embracing the stake with his arms, he closed his eyes and mouth, awaiting the blow which the executioner gave him, deliberately and heavily, standing on his left, and holding his axe in both hands. Upon receiving the blow, he sent forth a loud cry, 'Ah!' which was stifled in his blood. He raised his knees above the block, as if about to rise, and then subsided into the position in which he was before. The head not being entirely separated from the body by the blow, the executioner passed behind to the right; and taking the head by the hair with his right hand, with the left he sawed off part of the tracheal artery, and the skin of the neck which was not cut through,

and then threw the head on the scaffold, whence it bounded to the ground, *where it was remarked that it still made half a turn more and palpitated for some time.* The face was turned towards the nuns of St. Pierre, and the crown of the head towards the scaffold, with the eyes open. His body remained firm against the block, which he still embraced, until the executioner dragged it away to strip it, which he did, and then covered it with a cloth, and threw his cloak over it. The head, having been placed upon the scaffold, was laid with the body under the same cloth."

The execution of M. de Thou, like that of M. de Cinq-Mars, resembles an assassination. I give the account of it from the same journal, more horribly minute than in the letter from Montrésor, —

"The executioner came to cover his eyes with the handkerchief; but he did it badly, placing the corners of the handkerchief so that they covered his mouth. He raised it, and arranged it better. He adored the crucifix before setting his neck upon the block. He kissed the blood of Cinq-Mars, which had remained there. Then he laid his neck firmly upon the block, which a Jesuit brother had wiped with his handkerchief, because it was wet with blood, and asked this brother whether he was well placed, who told him to advance his head somewhat farther, which he did. At the same time, the executioner, perceiving that the strings of his shirt were not untied, and that they tightened his throat, put his hand to the collar to unfasten them. Feeling this, he asked, 'What is it? Must I take off my shirt?' and already began to do so. They answered, 'No, you must merely untie the strings,' which having done, he turned down his shirt-collar, and laid bare his neck and shoulders; and having again placed his neck upon the block, he pronounced his last words, which were, 'Maria mater gratiæ, mater misericordia, in manus tuas!' And then his arms began to tremble, awaiting the blow, which was struck high in the neck too near the head, by which blow his neck was cut only half through. The body fell on the left side of the block on its back, the face turned towards heaven, moving the legs, and feebly raising the hands. The executioner wanted to turn him over, to finish as he had begun; but terrified by the cries which were raised against him, he struck him two or three blows upon the throat, and thus severed his head, which remained on the scaffold.

"The executioner, having stripped him, carried his body, covered with a cloth, to the carriage which had brought them, where he also placed that of M. de Cinq-Mars, and their heads, which both had the eyes still open, especially that of M. de Thou, which appeared alive. Thence they were taken to the Feuillants, where M. de Cinq-Mars was interred before the high altar under the balustrade of the said church, through the goodness and authority of M. du Gay, — the treasurer of France in the district of Lyons. M. de Thou was embalmed by the care of his sister, and placed in a leaden coffin to be carried to the family vault.

"Such was the end of these two persons, who certainly merited to leave to posterity other memory than that of their death. I leave every person to form his own judgment of them, and content myself with pointing out that it is a great lesson for us of the inconstancy of the things of this world and the frailty of our nature."

The last wills of these two noble young men have come down to us in the letters which they wrote after their sentence was pronounced. That of M. de Cinq-Mars to the Maréchale d'Effiat, his mother, may appear cold to some persons, from the difficulty they may experience in transporting themselves to that epoch, when in the most serious circumstances people sought rather to repress their emotions than to express them with warmth, and in which great people, in their writings and conversation, avoided the *pathetic* as much as we cultivate it.

Letter from M. le Grand to his mother the Maréchale d'Effiat.

MADAME, MY DEAREST AND HIGHLY HONORED MOTHER, — I write to you, since I am not permitted to see you, to entreat you, Madame, to give me two last marks of your goodness, — the first, Madame, that you will give to my soul as many prayers as possible for my salvation; the other, that you obtain from the king the money I expended in my office of master of the horse, and what was owing to me otherwise in respect of it, before it was taken from me; and if this favor be not granted, that you will have the generosity to pay my creditors. All matters of this world are of such trifling interest that you cannot refuse me this last request, which I make for the repose of my soul. Believe me, Madame,

in this, should your own sentiment be opposed to my wish, since I, whose every step conducts me to a near death, am more capable than yourself of judging the value of the things of this world. Adieu, Madame; forgive me if I have ever failed in my respect towards you during my lifetime, and rest assured that I die,

My beloved and much honored mother, your very humble, very obedient, and very obliged son and servant,

HENRI D'EFFIAT DE CINQ-MARS.

The original manuscript is in the Royal Library at Paris,[1] written in a firm and calm hand.

The last letter of François Auguste de Thou.

We have seen that left alone in his prison, M. de Thou wrote a letter which was given to his confessor. "Here," said he, "is the last thought I shall have for this world." We have seen the efforts he made to detach himself from this last thought, and the fervent prayers he repeated. Striking his breast, he prays God to have mercy upon him; he rejects the world; he already envelops himself in his shroud. This last thought was the most cruel that can tear the heart of man. It was a last look towards a beloved woman; it was an adieu to his mistress, the Princesse de Gueméné. Its tone is grave, and the respect for rank is not neglected any more than that of his own personal dignity, and the solemn moment which approaches. I have recently found this precious letter.[2] It runs thus:

MADAME, — I have never felt under an obligation to you during my whole life until this moment, when about to leave it; I lose it with the less regret that you have rendered it *unhappy* to me. I hope that the life of the other world will be very different for me from this, and that I shall find there happiness as much above the imagination of man as it should be above his hope; mine, Madame, is founded only on the goodness of God and the merits of the passion of his Son, alone capable of effacing my sins, for which I am answerable to his justice, and which

[1] MSS. No. 9327.

[2] Biblioth. Royale de Paris, MSS. No. 9276, p. 233.

are of such excess that nothing but his mercy can exceed them. I entreat your pardon, Madame, with my whole heart for all I may have done which may have displeased you, and I make the same prayer to all *the persons whom I have hated for your sake*, protesting to you, Madame, that as far as the fidelity I owe to my God will allow it, I die, Madame, *too assuredly*, your very humble and very obedient servant, DE THOU.

LYONS, this 12 September, 1642.

How bitter a reproach! how melancholy a recurrence to life! If this woman were worthy of him, how could she have received such a letter and live! Could she ever be consoled for having deserved such a farewell?

The life of Madame la Princesse de Gueméné scarcely permits us to think that it was her severity that caused such sorrow, such profound grief. Tallemant des Réaux says in several places that M. de Thou was her lover. "*They say*," he adds (tom. i., p. 418), "*that he wrote to her after his condemnation!*" It is this letter which we have just read. It appears to me to be written by a man like the misanthrope of Molière, but with more piety; "*all the persons whom I have hated* for your sake," painfully resembles: —

"C'est que tout l'univers est bien reçu de vous."

But let us not seek to pry into griefs which nothing betrays but the last sigh at the foot of the scaffold.

UPON NON-DISCLOSURE.

The life of every celebrated man has one sole and precise meaning, visible at first glance to those who can judge the great events of the past, and which, I hope, has remained in the minds of those who have attentively read "Cinq-Mars." The blood of François Auguste de Thou flowed in the name of a sacred idea, and which will remain such so long as the religion of honor shall exist among us; it

is the *impossibility of denunciation from the lips of the man of honor.*

Statesmen of every age who have endeavored to introduce denunciation have hitherto completely failed, to the glory of our country. The fact that it was Louis XI., whose character was baseness itself, and his genius treachery, who first attempted this enterprise, is in itself a stain upon it; but this tree of evil, which he planted at Plessis-les-Tours, did not bring forth its poisonous fruit, and no one was found to denounce a citizen,

"Et, sa tête à la main, demander son salaire."

The reward was, however, set forth in the edict of Louis XI., dated the *twenty-second day of December, one thousand four hundred and seventy-seven:* an edict easy to comprehend in such a monarch at the moment when the Comte de la Marche, Jacques d'Armagnac, had just had his head cut off for high treason, and his lands, an immense property, impudently distributed among his judges, — a monstrous inheritance, unheard of since the days of Tiberius and Nero, — and which was accomplishing, while they forced the children of the condemned to receive, drop by drop, upon their foreheads the blood of their father from the scaffold above. After this fine stroke, he might go on, and imagine he had a right so to despise France as to cast at her such an edict, and to propose to her new infamies. Accustomed as he was to make a perpetual traffic in consciences for ready money, never making a step without a purse in one hand and an axe in the other, he followed the old maxim, which is no great effort of genius, and which Machiavel has so highly praised, — to place men between hope and fear. Louis XI. played his game subtly; but at last France arose and nobly played hers, showing him that she had other men than his barber. Despite the word of his invention, for we must honorably give it him, despite the softened

translation of *denunciation* into *revelation*, no one person deliberately left his own house to go and repeat a secret which in the openness of friendship had escaped another at the table or fireside. The vile ordinance was forgotten until the time when the Cardinal de Richelieu ordered its resurrection. M. de Thou had no stronghold to give in exchange for his pardon, like M. de Bouillon, and his death would add to the terror inspired by that of Cinq-Mars. If he had been pardoned, he would have been a young and virtuous censor; destined to survive the old minister, he would perhaps, like his father, be an historian, and write the life of the cardinal; and would be a judge in his turn, — an inflexible judge, indignant at the death of his friend, M. le Grand. M. de Richelieu thought of all this; and these reasons, which do not escape me, would not escape him. For the sake of mere impartiality, let us forget his angry quip about the President de Thou: "He put my name in his history, I'll place his in mine." Acquit him of vengeance, there still remains an inflexible hardness of heart, profound bad faith, and the most immoral egoism.[1] The virtuous life of M. de Thou, which might become useful to a State where everything was becoming corrupt, was disagreeable and dangerous to the minister. He did not hesitate; let us not hesitate, then, to judge this justice. We must by all means ascertain the grounds of these celebrated *State reasons*, which have been converted by some into a kind of holy ark not to be touched. Bad actions leave us the germ of bad laws, and there is no passing minister who does not seek to plant them, to preserve the source of his borrowed power, through love for this doubtful *éclat*. One thing may, however, reassure

[1] Dupuy has it in his Memoirs that when the exempt brought him the letter from the chancellor which announced the sentence, —

"And M. de Thou also!" said the cardinal, with an air of satisfaction. "M. le Chancelier has delivered me from a great burden. But Picart, they have no executioner there." We see he thought of everything.

us, that when such an idea is hatched in the brain of a political person, the gestation is long and painful, the birth would probably prove the death of the parent, and the failure a clear public happiness.

I do not think there is in history a fact more adapted than the trial of Auguste de Thou to testify against this fatal idea, should the evil genius of France ever will that the proposition of a law of non-revelation be renewed.

As nothing more inspires sound replies, or presents them in clearer expressions than imminent danger to a superior man, I see that from the first M. de Thou went to the bottom of the question of right and possibility with his reason, and to the bottom of the question of sentiment and honor with his noble heart. Let us listen to him, —

"The day of his confrontation with M. de Cinq-Mars, he said[1] that after having deeply communed with himself whether he ought to declare to the king [seeing him every day at the camp of Perpignan] the knowledge he had of this treaty, he resolved for several reasons not to mention it: —

"1. He must have accused Monsieur, the king's brother, of a State crime, and M. de Bouillon and M. le Grand, *who were all much more powerful* and more accredited than he, and that it was certain he would succumb in this action, of which he had no verifying proof. 'I could not have cited,' says he, 'the testimony of Fontrailles, who was absent; and M. le Grand would perhaps have denied then that he had spoken to me of it. I should have then passed for a calumniator, and my honor, which will ever be dearer to me than my life, would have been irreparably lost.'

"2. 'As to M. le Grand,' he adds those words which have been already quoted, and which possess an incomparable beauty in their antique, I might almost say evangelic, simplicity, 'he held me to be his only and faithful friend, and I would not betray him.'"

Whatever may be the secret enterprise assumed, — whether against a crowned head or against the constitution

[1] See the interrogation and confrontation (Sept. 12, 1642). Journal of M. le Cardinal-Duc, written with his own hand (p. 190).

of a democratic State, or against the bodies which represent a nation; whatever may be the nature of the execution or the plot, — whether assassination, or expulsion by armed force, or insurrection of the people, or corruption and revolt of the paid soldiery, — the situation will be the same between the conspirator and him who has received his confidence. His first thought will be the irreparable and eternal loss of his honor and his name, either as calumniator, if he furnishes no proofs, or as a base informer if he gives them, punished in the first case by ignominious penalties, punished in the second by the public detestation, which points him out with the finger as stained with the blood of his friends.

When M. de Thou deigned to explain this first cause of silence, I believe that it was in order to place himself on a level with the minds which judged him, and in order to enter into the general tone of the trial, and the precise terms of the laws, that ever assume themselves made only for the basest souls, which they circumscribe and press upon by gross barriers, and an inexorable and uniform necessity. He demonstrated that he could not have been an informer, even had he wished it. He implies, "If I had been infamous, I could not have accomplished my infamy; no one would have believed me." But after these few words upon the physical impossibility, he adds the motive of the moral impossibility, — a genuine motive, and one of an immutable, eternal verity, which all religions have recognized and sanctified, which all nations have held in honor, — "He held me to be his friend."

Not only did he not betray him, but it will be observed that in all his interrogatories and confrontations with M. de Bouillon and M. de Cinq-Mars, he names and compromises no one.[1]

[1] See the interrogatory and *procès-verbal*, prepared by M. le Chancelier, etc., 1642.

"Immediately I was alone with M. de Thou," says Fontrailles, in his Memoirs, "he told me of the journey I had just made into Spain, which much surprised me, for I believed that it had been concealed from him, in conformity with the deliberation which had been taken on the subject. When I asked him how he had learned it, he declared to me very frankly in confidence that he knew it from the queen, and that she had it from Monsieur.

"I was not ignorant that her Majesty had greatly desired a cabal to be got up, and had contributed to it with all her power." [1]

M. de Thou might, then, have supported himself upon this authority; but he knows that he shall thus cause Queen Anne of Austria to be persecuted, and he is silent. He is also silent concerning the king himself, and does not deign to repeat what he said to the cardinal in his private interview. He will not receive his life at this price.

As to M. de Cinq-Mars, he has but one reason to give, — "he held me to be his friend." Even had he, instead of being a proved friend, been merely a man connected with M. de Cinq-Mars by transient relations, *he held him to be his friend*, he had faith in him, *and he would not betray him.* Everything is in that.

When the Christian religion instituted confession, it, as I have elsewhere said, deified confidence. As people might have distrusted their confidant, it hastened to declare the priest who should reveal the avowal made to his ear criminal and worthy of eternal death. Nothing less than this could suddenly transform a stranger into a friend, a brother, and cause a Christian to open his soul to the first comer, to the unknown person whom he may never see again, and sleep at night in peace, as sure of his secret as if he had told it to God alone.

Thus, all that the confessor could do, with the assistance of his faith and the authority of the Church, has been to attain the being considered by the penitent as a friend, to effect those salutary overflowings, those sacred tears, those

[1] Narrative of M. de Fontrailles.

complete narratives, those reserveless confidences which grave and true friendship, before the institution of confession, had alone the right to receive, — friendship, the holy friendship which returns in virtuous counsel what it receives in guilty avowals.

If, then, the confessor pretends to the tenderness of heart, to the supreme goodness of the friend, what friend ought not to regard as his first duty the entire security of the secret deposited in him, as in the tabernacle of the confessor?

And it is not merely of the old and tried friend that we speak, but of every man who by another man has been treated as a friend, of the first comer who, hand linked in hand, has received a serious confidence. The right of hospitality is as old as the institution of the family, old as the human race itself. No tribe, no horde, however savage it may be, conceives the possibility of delivering up its guest. A secret is a guest, seeking refuge in the heart of an honest man, as in an inviolable asylum. Whosoever delivers up that secret and sells it, is out of the law of nations.

It were a deep shame indeed for the government that could only maintain its brief existence at the price of such barbarian laws, or stand erect except by the aid of such dark supports. But even though it wished to make use of them, it could not. For it to be practicable, civilization must have progressed with the wrong foot foremost. But the world has attained a general delicacy of sentiment which renders it out of the question even to suggest such public actions. It is quite extraordinary, indeed, how things perfectly permissible and understood only a few centuries back are now not done or said or even seriously named, and this without any of them having been formally abolished. But this is one of those genuine changes of manners which bring forth genuine and enduring laws. What country is there now, however remote, where the

man judging would venture to outrage public opinion by arrogating to himself the spoils of the man judged? All laws are not the work of human hands. The law which prohibits this monstrous inheritance is not a written law; it has tacitly set up its pillar among us. By its side is that which says *that man should not be a denouncer;* and the humblest journalist in our day would not venture to sit down at the table of him who had failed in obedience to this law.

If the politicians of our time must need revive some old engine of barbarian ages, I should, for my part, prefer the bringing out and cleaning and polishing and applying the thumb-screw and the rack, for these and the other instruments of torture would at all events defile only the body and not the soul of God's creatures. They might perhaps extort a shriek from the agonized flesh; but the cry of the nerves and the bones under the red-hot pincers were less dishonorable to a government than the frigid buying and selling of a man's head, as it were, over a counter. In the annals of the vile, no name stands lower than that of JUDAS.

Yes, better the peril of the prince than the demoralization of the whole human species. Better the downfall of a dynasty, or of a particular form of government, better that even of a nation, — for all these things may be replaced, may be formed again, — than the death of virtue in man.

THE END.

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